THE DISCIPLES

H. E. HAMILTON KING

20p

THE DISCIPLES

BY

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AUTHOR OF 'ASPROMONTE, AND OTHER POEMS'
'A BOOK OF DREAMS' ETC.

LONDON

KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRUBNER & CO., LTD.

MCMXXVII

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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
MORRISON AND GIBB LTD., LONDON AND EDINBURGH

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THE DISCIPLES.

OVERTURE.

1872.

I WRITE of the Disciples, because He
Who was their Master, having left on earth
The memory of a face that none could paint,
The echo of a voice that none could reach,
Hath left his own immortal words and works
To be a witness for him. Who should dare
To add one line or lesson unto these?
And in this year of loss, this first blank year
For us whom he held near and dear to him,
The heart is far too full to speak of thee,
Except through speaking of thy faithful ones,
JOSEPH MAZZINI, Master, first of those
The Sons of Men who are the Sons of God!

O Book of mine, which he commanded! long
Waited and worked for, and achieved too late!
Whose first leaves flying over-seas, like flights
Of white doves loosened sweeping straight to home.

Were carried unto Pisa, and found there
Mourning, and at the dead feet were laid low,
Instead of in the master's living hand ;—
One day too late, and so came short for all,
And missed the confirmation of his eyes ;
Missed for this world the comfort of his voice ;—
But have not therefore been unknown to him.
I do but write as he inspired it me ;
There is no passage but he knew it first ;
I know there is no line but must have passed
Some time or other through his brain to mine ;
Though not by utterance, by the finer threads,
Which we, who live by vision more than speech,
Are conscious of, but cannot frame again.

For he was gone that day without farewell,—
Suddenly parted from the martyrdom
Of lifelong sorrow to immortal peace ;—
And in the momentary shock of loss,
That made this world henceforth another world,
Something we knew of what he first had felt,
Who walked alone with God, and had no Higher
Of humankind to be a help to him.
The sweetness of his praise shall not be mine ;
Instead, the more pathetic sacred sense
Of something wanting, and for ever here ;
Of something striven for, not without God's grace,
And stamped with His denial ; therefore ranked
With other loss in life unmerited,

Remembered ever with some faint far hope
Of its repayment on another day.

Now no man fears thee: so the slanderer's voice,
More busy with the living than the dead,
Is turned from thee; and men begin to praise,
Seeing thy work was wrought without their aid;
And eyes are lifted to behold the true
Life-proven figure of the man who long
Went in and out amongst them undiscerned.
And though the generation is not born
Yet, that shall look upon thee in the light,
When the things prophesied have come to pass,
Yet the world's heart is softening unto thee
Whom the world hated, following with hate,
And wrong, and falsehood, through a holy life.

But I loved thee; I knew thee the first time
My eyes fell on some words of thine by chance.
I was a child then:—and when I am old,
And my eyes fail from following in their flights
The autumn birds into the far-off heavens,
Still mid the youth of that day I shall stand
Prouder than any in their pride of life,
Having beheld what they shall never see,
Having heard words that they can never hear,
Having a face to make the darkness dawn,
Ever within my memory for a friend;
Remembering through the twilight of those days

This solace of the sunrise, this delight,
Bought by such pain as then shall nigh be past.—
For grace he gave me that outweighs all pain,
And light of heart I follow, dark or clear;
Because I hold a prouder laurel-leaf
Than any singer of imperial courts:
For he, the Seer, the Master, and the Saint,
Named me his poet, crowned me laureate
Of his Republic:—therefore are these words.

I hold this charge for ever on my soul;—
He loved me, he looked on me with such eyes
As sent forth many a young heroic life
To die rejoicing on a lonely quest;
Saying to me, 'Do not die, but live, and speak
The words that God speaks to thee. Do not shrink
For youth or for subjection:—I endorse
Thy speech beforehand, for I see thy soul.
Hath not God written somewhat on thy face
To fade and flicker, for a few to see?
Write it out large in words that will not fade,
And that can travel farther than thine eyes,
And will not die when thou art laid in dust.
I lay it on thee that thou keep not back
That fire of life that burns thy brows so clear.
What springs from a pure heart and a true mind,
And a will bound to the Eternal Will,
With eyes that look beyond the world to God,
Is worth the hearing. Do not doubt, but speak.

For nine long years I held my peace, while God,
By tender tokens irresistible,
Laid silence on me ; or by manifold
Pressure of claims and voices from without ;
Or overmastering constancy of pain ;
The cares and troubles of the outer courts,
Not of the inner, where the angels sing
Ever, through clouds, through winds, through fires,
through calm).

And once he chided me because the songs
Were slow in coming :—now I think he knows
(Or would know, were it not too small a thing)
The truth he took in trust upon my word.
For I made answer, 'If I must be dumb,
If breath but lasts for labour, not for speech,
It is not that I falter in my faith,
It is not that I alter in my will,
It is not that I fail from idleness :
It is that God hath set such bounds for me,
I cannot pass them ;—I can say no more.
But grant me this assurance once for all—
By that obedience which is life to me,
Binding me one with higher law of life—
That thou wilt trust me. I am true to thee.
Dost thou believe it? And if, all the years,
My lips are loosed not, and no word of mine
Bear witness for me that my faith is firm,
And still I follow in the speechless trance,

Wilt thou believe it?' And he looked at me
With searching eyes,—then answered grave and clear,
'I will believe it.' And we spake no more.

And now I speak, not with the bird's free voice,
Who wakens the first mornings of the year
With low sweet pipings, dropped among the dew;
Then stops and ceases, saying, 'All the spring
And summer lies before me; I will sleep;
And sing a little louder, while the green
Builds up the scattered spaces of the boughs;
And faster, while the grasses grow to flower
Beneath my music; let the full song grow
With the full year, till the heart too is filled.

But as the Swan (who has pass'd through the spring,
And found it snow still in the white North land,
And over perilous wilds of Northern seas,
White wings above the white and wintry waves,
Has won, through night and battle of the blasts,
Breathless, alone, without one note or cry)
Sinks into summer by a land at last;
And knows his wings are broken, and the floods
Will bear him with them whither God shall will;—
And knows he has one hour between the tides;—
And sees the salt and silent marshes spread
Before him outward to the shining sea,
Whereon was never any music heard.—

I am not proud for anything of mine,

Done, dreamed, or suffered, but for this alone:
That the great orb of that great human soul
Did once deflect and draw this orb of mine,
(In the shadow of it, not the sunward side,)
Until it touched and trembled on the line
By which my orbit crossed the plane of his;
And heard the music of that glorious sphere
Resound a moment; and so passed again,
Vibrating with it, out on its own way;
Where, intertwined with others, it may yet
Spin through its manifold mazes of ellipse,
Amid the clangour of a myriad more,
Revolving, and the dimness of the depths
Remotest, through the shadows without shape,
Arcs of aphelion, silences of snow:
But henceforth doth no more go spiritless,
But knows its own pole through the whirling ways
And hath beheld the Angel of the Sun,
And yearns to it, and follows thereunto;
And feels the conscious thrill that doth transmute
Inertia to obedience, underneath
The ordered sway of balanced counter-force,
That speedeth all life onward through all space,
And hears the key-note of all various worlds,
Caught and combined in one vast harmony,
And floated down the perfect Heavens of God.

But when? but when? O, Master, thou didst say
The time was coming. Is it come? Alas,
It seems not so! The days are dark with storm;-

The coming revolutions have no face
Of peace and music, but of blood and fire;
The strife of Races scarce consolidate,
Succeeded by the far more bitter strife
Of Classes—that which eighteen hundred years
Since Christ spake have not yet availed to close,
But rather brought to issue only now,
When first the Peoples international
Know their own strength, and know the world is theirs,
Which has been kept from them by force so long;—
By force, not right; for no man spake them fair,
To keep them patient through their helplessness;
It was enough that they were chained and dumb.
Will they be spoken fair to now? who knew
No Saviour through the serfdom's centuries,
Who *will* not know Him now their turn has come.
Will not their day of reckoning be a day
Of judgment, and of cursing all divine
And human laws, to whom the world was made
So hopeless and so cruel that all names
Holy and dear are mockery unto them,
The fatherless, who pay with violence
The violence suffered, and in the recoil,
Hating the world, hate God for its sake too?

For Might instead of Right is hell on earth,
Battle of darkness still against God's side.
Whether it be soft-handed tyrannies
Of those who at kings' tables daintily

Feast in the bloom of eyes and bloom of wine ;
Or of the swarming millions from the mire,
With masks of swine for images of God,
More blind, more brutal, and more terrible ;
Yet not so blasphemous :—for these will come,
Having not known God, and denying Him ;
But those *did* know, and took His name in vain,
And wrought the works of Cain by words of His.

We of the royal lineage, of the line
Unbroken of all kingdoms of the North,
Up to the dim names of mythologies—
If once the people whom our fathers spoiled,
And drove as sheep, and shut their ears against,
Should rise against us, and despoil us too,
Seizing the fruits of their own ignorant hands
(Which power and mind transmute to luxury) ;
And take our children to be under them,
And grind for them, until in face and form
They too degenerate - shall we dare complain ?
Our limbs are beautiful through drudgeries
Of theirs, which left them rest and space to grow
Through generations to the perfect curves ;
Our hair has got the gold because the dust
Of the world's highways never soiled the feet
Of our forefathers ; and the blue-veined hands
Were moulded to their tenderness of touch
By centuries of service rude and hard.
It is God's judgment if He smite us so ;

Let us endure it, saying, He is just;
But yet pray on as we were taught to pray,
In an immortal hope,—Thy kingdom come!

For when thou first didst find the Prophet's robe
Thrust upon thee with utterance of lament,
There was between the rulers of the earth
What they in blasphemy did dare to call
Holy Alliance: and the peoples slept.
Thank God thy word has cleared the world of such
As kings were in those days, not long ago!
But thou didst reach the root of things even then
With thy prophetic eyes, and God did set
A witness for Himself in words of thine
Which still the world may read;—but no man stood
Up in the place of power, and gave the hand
To thee, and took the helm to the Untried.
Is the world Christ's yet? Wherefore then wast thou
Outlaw in every kingdom of the world,
Except in England? England, thank thou God
For that cold shelter that thou gavest him,
For which he blessed thee, giving thee back love
For the long years of scornful disregard!
Was he not branded with all calumny
Because he dared to teach the naked truth,
Christ's words were not a book for Sabbath days,
But law of life, and judgment of the land;
Not to be chosen, and pieced, and dogmatised,
But lived up to—the whole and not a part,

Alive not dead, one spirit in new forms;—
And lived as Christ lived, poor, despised, alone,
Apart with God, and working miracles,
Not on the waves and winds, but on the wills
Of men, upon the hearts of multitudes,
The hidden germs of fresh humanities,
Of live confederations yet unborn,
The hidden founts of gathering river-floods,
To bear one day the music of his name
Through lands of harvest to the boundless sea.

The rulers would not hear thee in their day:
And now perchance the tide is on the turn,
And the next flood will bring the fierce waves in—
The long-pent surges of the deeper depths—
To swallow up the landmarks of the Old.
And thou wilt meet them, as thou heretofore
Hast met the men who built the walls and towers
To hold them safe against the shocks of doom—
Thou, living yet in words that cannot die,
Saying, 'Come no farther; not upon this road,
But on that other whither Christ has gone!
Have for your watchword not the Rights of Man,
But this more sacred, more invincible,
Duties of Man, and Law of Life in God!'
And will those deep eyes turn them in their wrath
More than they did those others? We shall see.
It may be so; for he held Hope with Faith,
And set his hope upon the people's heart.

I write of days that will not come again;
Not in our time :—the dream of Italy
Is now a dream no longer; and the night
Is over, with its beacons in the dark.
Look you, who follow to the heritage
Of a fair day, that you be worthy those
Who conquered it for you against the world.
Let God's idea grow in you, and the faith
Of Italy burn holier :—but no more
Will blood be shed for it; that page is turned.
Now mayst thou shine or fade; the star that shone
Far on the lonely dreamer through the depths,
(When all men mocked, and said, 'It is the light
Of the marsh-phantoms luring wanderers on
Who once have floundered out of the broad road'),
Is now set clear in sight of all men's eyes,
And ranked among the glittering Pleiades.
Italia has to-day the name and place,
And the fair body of freedom;—but the soul?
Of all he left behind, there is not one
Found worthy even to follow him to a grave!
O Star, be worthy of that starry soul
That rose and set, that loved and worshipped thee

Italia! when thy name was but a name,
When to desire thee was a vain desire,
When to achieve thee was impossible,
When to love thee was madness, when to live
For thee was the extravagance of fools,

When to die for thee was to fling away
Life for a shadow,—in those darkest days
Were some who never swerved, who lived and strove,
And suffered for thee, and attained their end.
And most of these have died that thou mayst live,
And he is dead now who was First of them.

And they are dead ; and I half scorn myself
That I sit here to sing the songs of them,
Of which no word did echo in their ears
When they were dying. Nay, it was to them
Not words, but music ;—music went with them
Along the Sacred Way Capitoline ;
And inarticulate the trumpets rang
About the dying ears of those that fell ;
And symphonies of some orchestral strain
Floated, and fell, and joined its notes again,
All day, all night, in one vibrating stream,
Across the darkness of the prison walls ;
And sweeter than the sounds that from the harp
Of him who vanquished sirens in their song,
Thrilled out of Argo o'er Italian seas,
Some far-off bells did echo through the lands
Of exile, to the weary wayfarers,
Pierced them with pain, and struck them with desire,
And timed their bleeding steps upon the march
With some great watchword still reverberate.

Yet, even so, I could not speak the same,

If it had cost me nothing, heart or health ;
For some may follow Truth from dawn to dark,
As a child follows by his mother's hand,
Knowing no fear, rejoicing all the way ;
And unto some her face is as a Star
Set through an avenue of thorns and fires,
And waving branches black without a leaf ;
And still It draws them, though the feet must bleed,
Though garments must be rent, and eyes be scorched :
And if the valley of the shadow of death
Be passed, and to the level road they come,
Still with their faces to the polar star,
It is not with the same looks, the same limbs ;
But halt and maimed, and of infirmity.
And for the rest of the way they have to go,
It is not day but night, and oftentimes
A night of clouds wherein the stars are lost.
And such are some of those who speak, and live,
And wait, and work, though blunted of desire,
And know that their true life is hid with God.

. . . . . .

The way is smoother, not so glorious.
These days are darker, for we yet may die
In some great battle for the cause of God,
(Call no man happy till he so has died) ;
But not as these died, with the morning lights
Upon their faces, standing rapture-pale
Before the guns, or under sword and scourge
Of those whom they had hated as we hate

Untruth and malice and disdain of God ;—
But by the hand and under heel of those
Whom we have loved against their hate for us,
Trusted in spite of wrongs for heritage,
And die at last by ;—some of us who may
Have given up youth and hope of happy life
While one remained to suffer for and save,
And come without their calling, and stepped down
Out of the guarded fold and pastures green,
Into the ranks of those for sacrifice ;
And have not stirred thence, though the iron be hard,
And flesh be faint, and death be slow to come
All these long years, for whose sake grant us, God,
Grace to endure yet faithful to the end.

JACOPO RUFFINI.[1]

GENOA, 1833.

WE are betrayed and lost; and I am bound
In the tower of Genoa, this hour that should sound
The tocsin of our call, 'Awake! arise,
Young Italy! Thy time is come! The skies
Shine towards the dawn!' Our dream was vain, was vain;
Darkness hath settled on the land again;
The shadow of the midnight gathereth
Once more, and all is sleeping. It is death
To speak the very name of Italy
To this Italian people; therefore we
Die. That is little: we have more to save:—
To us, the young, the desolate, God gave,
Through him whom first of all He did inspire,
A charge to keep through blood, through death, through fire;
Though flesh should faint, though hearts should break and bleed,

[1] See note A.

To bear unhurt and whole the sacred seed,
Young Italy, the unborn child of God,
Through perilous ways of wilderness untrod,
Until the day of her deliverance.
So help me God, as I inviolate
Have borne it still through good and evil chance.
And yet another life, more fair, more great
In issues, and in grace of God, than mine,
O friend, who madest my life sweet with thine,
I have in hold to save or to betray,
Now in this last extremity at bay.
I hold it still, the secret yet is mine :—
How long? Each slow hour helps to undermine
The ivory tower, the fortress of the brain.
O Italy! thou canst not rise again
If now thy firstlings fail thee! And I fail.
Help me, O God, or now they will prevail!

Because the deadly drops of atropine
Are mixed into the water and the wine,
So subtly that the treacherous poison draught
Loosens the bonds of will, and being quaffed,
Works through the nerve and brain, so that the sense
To outward pressure grows the more intense,
While the higher energy, the nobler pain,
Is dulled and weakened, and the slackened strain
Of human struggle leaves us but the prey
Of passing ease, and instincts of the day.

I have to die to-day, lest I should live
To see my friend look on me, and forgive
Me for betraying him. No, let me meet
God's own face rather, at His judgment seat,
And say: 'When faith no more was left alive
In all the world, I and my friend did strive
Against the world for Thy faith's sake, O Lord,
And raised Thy banner; and for this the sword
Of kings strikes down among us, and the curse
Of priests cleaves to us in our daily ways,
And fate of exile falls on us, or worse
Fate of the prison in the flower of days:
Out of their judgment, Lord, I come to Thine—
Out of their tyranny to Thine award.
All joy, all hope of earth did we resign
Long since to follow Thee; but now more hard
Must be the sacrifice, mine for my friend,
Denial of that one last trust in Thee,
That we might both endure unto the end—
Grant it to him e'en yet, if not to me!'

Can I do nothing more for thee, my friend,
Whom I have loved so? Can I only end
By not betraying thee? Take what I give,
And hold it sacred as a token sent
Of our two spirits' deathless sacrament,
This dying for thee when I could not live.
I do not fear thy scorn, but I do fear
Thy sorrow. O, my brother, take this cheer

With thee upon the glorious way thou goest,—
The dark and lonely way for thee who showest
The lamp for those that follow;—but for thee,
What light but of the stars?—This doom for me
Is not so bitter, rather sweetness grows,
Thinking of thee, out of this early close;
And peace is with me; and without regret
My face unto the sunset skies is set.
I could not give thee more, I cannot less,
Than my whole life, even in fruitlessness.

O Giuseppe, this shall be my flower,
That I died first for thee! No other soul
Shall come before me to that unlit goal,
Or take pre-eminence of me of this hour!
And this shall be my crown through all the days
Hereafter, when men speak of thee thy due,
And speak thy name, they will speak my name too,
And say, 'Mazzini loved him;' nay, their praise
Shall yet reach higher, saying all the truth,
'Better than all the world besides, in youth,
Mazzini loved him.' That remembrance holds
My name in lustre of thy name, and folds
My spirit in a happy mist of sleep;
And not for ever lonely I lie down;
For me too in their hearts shall all men keep
For thy sake,—so shall I have love for crown.

I know not if God loveth me at all,

For He hath sent no answer to my call
When I have prayed, 'Let me but see Thy face
And suffer!' but I suffered without grace
Of such revealing; and I prayed again,
'Let me but keep pure, without sear or stain
Of conscience!' and my prayer so far availed
That not for lust of youth or life I failed.
But having won so far, there comes an hour
When a pure will avails not, and the power
Is given to them who would not only kill
The body shamefully, but bend the will
By hellish arts to baseness, and would say,
'Defiled for ever pass upon thy way,
Soul that God could not save!' Thou dost not save
Me, God, nor care to keep the heart I gave
To Thee, and which is Thine for evermore;
All doors are shut to Thee, except one door
Of death, and if through that I flee to Thee,
  Thou knowest not from any fear of man,
From any furnace of his cruelty,
  Where still Thy angels' holy wings might fan,
I come,—but from the clasping hands of sin,
  That on the vesture of the flesh have wrought
  Through poison, till the very blood is brought
To be a traitor to the heart within.

'If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out;
And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off;
And if thy life offend thee, do not doubt

That God requires that also. Loose and doff
The spotted garment from thee—whatsoe'er
Come after :—I have not quite known despair
While I have life to give for sacrifice :
Accept it, Lord ; give me his life for price.
This life we every one of us receive
Out of Thy hands for trust, we may not leave
Without Thy summons, nor should any plea
Of force or danger be excuse to Thee.
To violence, to torture, and to death,
  To smiling eyes and pressure of soft hands,
Man's spirit still unconquered answereth,
  With faith for shield, while still his reason stands.
And if for these I should forsake my post,
Then spare me not Thy judgments uttermost.
But this new, subtle stealing of the brain,
  What answer have I to it but to take
  Presumptuously Thy angel's sword, and make
Mine own hand sin against myself : and when
  No choice is left but this dark choice to-day,
  'Thine own self or thy brother thou must slay
And sin against,' then I can only choose
Myself to perish ; and though never prayer
  Of mine before might pierce Thy heavens of steel,
My love and my despair be my excuse
  With Thee, O God, to Whom I make appeal,
Now that myself to Thee my cause I bear.

Is it the poison working in my brain,

That I as in a vision see things plain
Before me? all the centuries afar,
With thy face, Giuseppe, for their star,
Grow radiant; and the life now bought with mine,
Hereafter for the Light of Nations shine,
For the world's wonder, for its tears and praise,
For the world's Angel in its later days.
And Italy, thy Mother, with the crown
Glorious upon her, at thy feet bows down,
And bathes them with her tears, the Queen that thou
Knewest in vision, and that knows thee now;
'O Loved too late, look on me reconciled!
I am no more thy Mother, but thy Child.'
And with the resurrection in her eyes,
The Rome of the Republic shall arise
As thou hast dreamed her, and stretch forth her hand
As to a Bridegroom, and her stature stand
Above the world for worship, and no more
Shall darkness cover her true name, Amor.
And Genoa, the place where I was born,
Shall lift her head out of a dream at morn,
And proudest of all cities wake and stir,
Because another, too, was born in her.
And all bright faces of heroic men
Beholding thy face, not the young face then,
Burn brighter in their gazing towards it, thus
Signing in silence: 'Thou art first of us.'
And queenly women, golden-haired and tall,
Bend towards thee, and the brows imperial

Of poets wait upon thee, and rejoice
To listen for the echo of thy voice. . . .

But then midst all the lovely hands and eyes
Held forth to thine, and seeking thy replies,
Amongst them, Giuseppe, keep a place
Within thy heart, the holy, for my face;
My face that now for thee grows white with death,
And through the dark thy face remembereth.
They will not love thee more than I do now,
Though many follow where I went before.
When all the world has changed to thee, and thou
Art known of men, remember then that I
In my first youth was first for thee to die,
And love me, Giuseppe, evermore.

O, Giuseppe, let now thy heart rise
To its own sorrow's height! This sacrifice
Make it thy own, my brother! Rise and bring
The first fruits of thy soul, an offering
Upon the altar of thine Italy.
Do this first violence to thy heart for me,
To live without me. Thou hast many a woe
To suffer, and a longer way to go,
And harder work than mine; but through thy life,
Through all its anguish, all its storms of strife,
Through bitter travail in the slow sore birth
Of a new-linked Humanity on earth,
Through exile and through prison; and the pain

Of hope again defeated and again ;
Through the steep wilderness, up whose long heat
Unsheltered, still will pass the bleeding feet
Unswerving ; through the visions crowned too late
Of the unrecognised Apostolate ;
Through lonely days and nights, and evil fame ;
  Through that dread fire awaiting thee—to see
  Thy best and dearest pass to death for thee,
And with thy own hand, in the altar-flame
To lay thy lambs, O shepherd, and to be
  Of thy beloved forsaken and betrayed
At the pale pass of thy extremity ;—
  Through all thy brethren's sins upon thee laid ;
And through that darkest and most awful hour
When doubt of God springs on thee, to deflower
The soul it cannot vanquish, and thy prayer
Hangs on the verge of bottomless despair :—
Then, when thou sinkest, mayst thou know at last
An arm invisible about thee cast,
Another voice in a serener air
Unfaltering hold the pauses of thy prayer,
And on thy fainting forehead like the breath
Of rainy winds to prisoners parched to death,
The sudden rapture of an angel's kiss ;
And thy faith be renewed to thee by this,
Invincible, undying ; and thy heart
  Will tell thee, Giuseppe, it is I ;
And not in vain shall I so soon depart,
  If God but grant me ministry so high—

To be thy angel in the future years,
And reach a hand to thee from other spheres.

I will wait for thee—I will fill the days
Until thy coming with the love that stays
Last of all earthly things by me, and takes
My hand through these dark waterfloods, and makes
Death lovely for thy sake—the love that showed
First the true stars of heaven to light the road,
And make it straight unto eternity,
With aim of all Progressive Life to Thee,
O Father, O Divine, Whom, darkened so
By priests and tyrannies, we could not know
Until that pure hand woke us, with the stroke
Of Thy great message, and the morning broke
Upon the mouldering slumber of the world
That had forgotten Thee, and the keen rays hurled
Terror and clamour down the ways of hell,
Where men lay lost and dreaming all was well;
And the old Word again spake trumpet-clear,
'Lo, I am with you always, even here
To the world's end;' until the creeds of Christ,
That have been like their Master sacrificed,
In simple splendour light the land of dawn,
And the day cometh!

But to me, withdrawn,
By this hour's agony, from ways of men,
It will not come on earth. Yet even then

I while thou prayest will join prayer with thee
To Him Who first to thee the vision sent,
That He may hasten the accomplishment
Of the prefigured Life of Italy.

But if—it is so early—if the gleam
Be starlight and not sunlight; if the dream
Be for another cycle; if long years
Of darkness, and of sorrow, and of tears,
Must yet pass over her before the ways
Of God be shown to her in later days;—
Then for the love's sake we must ever bear
Unto each other, I will urge my prayer
The higher, my brother, for thy bitter need,
That thou unstained mayst keep thy soul indeed,
That for no bitterness of hope betrayed,
For no impatience of the furnace made
Sevenfold the hotter for the perfect proof
Whereby thy spirit to its height is wrought,
Thou shouldst let go thy faith, or stand aloof
From witnessing to that eternal thought—
God in all Life, and all Humanity
Interpreter progressive of His Law:—
That so once more that glory that we saw
May clasp us both to immortality.

Ah, Mother of mine, so beautiful! Thy son
Should have been worthier of thee, and have done

Somewhat to make thy name a star to men,
And given thee back some perfect hour again.
O first, O last, with whom I could not part!
And shall not now, because I know thou art
Not far off from the gates of Paradise:—
I have known heaven through thee, not otherwise:
For when, a child, first of the saints I heard,
  I understood of them from sense of thee,
And each one had thy face and hands, and stirred
  My heart to worship through thy purity;
But none so tender.—This at least is thine,
  Thy child hast thou kept all these painful years,
Nursed in the patience of a love divine,
  Pure by thy kisses, faithful by thy tears.
O sweet, O sorrowful, who didst not spare
  Thy loving life in ministry to such
  As have but paid thee with pain overmuch;
Who lying in God's arms hast learned to bear
  The slow sad hours with smiles, and set thy face
  Still as an angel's to the bitter grace
Of the sharp strokes wherewith He chasteneth
His best-beloved;—Love is strong as death;
And no farewell we need to take, for thou
And I shall not be parted long:—but now,
O Giuseppe, would that thou wert near!
I am speaking to thee, and thou dost not hear!
And out of heaven God sends no help to me.
O friend, O friend! of this our agony

Will any in the days hereafter say?—
'He passed alone the untrodden awful way;
He understood not, but we understand—
GOD hid His face, but held him by the hand.

UGO BASSI.

1849.

FRA UGO BASSI, Servant of our Lord,
One of the Order of Saint Barnabas,
The Sons of Consolation,—late of Rome;
Born in Bologna, and brought back of God
There for His sake to die when all was done.
Of how I came to know him, and the rest,
I will relate in full before I die:—
Who loved him, and will love him evermore.

I.

1847.

Among the mountains, on the farther side
Of far Abruzzo, lies Cialdolè,
The highest hamlet upon all those hills.
There was I born, and there lived all the years,
(And all were happy), while I was a boy.
I think the sun was always shining then,
Upon the hillsides where I kept the goats,
That were my father's;—but when I was born
He set apart a pair to be my own;

And these increased, until a little flock
Was ready for me, to be led away
To the new home upon the mountain-ledge,
Which I had now begun to build in hope ;
The spot where grew the sward most smooth and fine,
A little lower than my father's house ;
While in another house sat my betrothed,
And spun the flax, and when I looked on her,
And said ' Next year shall bring our wedding-day,'
Lifted her great black eyes and smiled on me.
But in a certain year fell many plagues
Upon the country. First, the frost and snow
On the high hills ; and then, when summer came,
The rain and blight ;—far down upon the plains
The mulberries and the maize were smitten sore ;
And on the mountain slopes the vintage failed,
And the flax withered ; and in all the land
All harvest came to nought ; and to our ears
The rumours came of famine, and at last
The thing itself came towards us, creeping on
Like a storm-shadow ;—and the want was felt.
For when our own land failed us, what had we,
Who lived on our own land, and had no stores,
Nor gold, nor markets? Also, then, the beasts
Began to die and sicken ; day by day
The goats dropped down, and we beheld them die,
And could not help them. Now our corn and wine,
Our oil and milk, and all our stock, was gone,
And nothing in our need was left to us

To live on through the winter. Most of us
Had not to live through it. With autumn broke
A pestilence of fever loose on us :
'The famine-fever' the wan people said.
Now had God smitten every living thing,
Beast, and green herb, and man. Within a month
Had half our hamlet perished ; and of those
Who still remained, the half were stricken down,
And the rest went about like daylight ghosts,
Waiting their turn. There was no man to help.
Then spake our priest, who, like ourselves, was poor
And ruined : 'Children, what are we to do?
There is no help at all in all this land.
The mountains and the valleys are stripped bare,
Will God then let us perish utterly?
Now will I take my staff in hand, and go
Unto the Holy City, unto Rome,
Unto the Holy Father, to beseech
His succour : for if any aid can come,
It is from thence.' And he took leave of us
Dejectedly, saying, 'God and all the saints
Have pity on you!' and departed so.

But whether he reached Rome I cannot tell,
Nor whether by the way he fell, for he
Came no more back, nor did we ever hear
Tidings of him ; and still we died, and died.
We had no hope ; we only wondered now
Who should die last, for then there would be none

To bury him. I think the time had come
For Christmas: and my father had been laid
Beside my mother, and my sister too
Was dead, and my betrothed; and I now lay
The last of all the house, sick unto death.
I was not sad to die, for there was now
Nothing left in the world;—but in a dream
I suffered;—there was none to come to me,
And whether there was water by my side
I know not;—but I heard the fountain fall,
Outside the doorway, from the little trough,
Falling and ever falling, sweetest sound
Of water,—and I thirsted more and more,
Burning and craving;—for methought a cup
Of water stood beside me, and in thirst
I raised myself, and stretched my hand and felt,
And took the cup, and held it tremblingly
Until it touched my lips;—and all at once
I lay there helpless, and no cup at all;—
I had not stirred—and yet again I tried,
And reached the water, and it touched my lips
Again, and yet again it was a dream;
Again, again through all the long dark hours,
Always the thirst, the striving, and no drop
Once tasted. Was it hours, or days, or weeks?
And once I came unto myself, and all
Was agony, past thinking and past speech.
But in my heart, in my extremity
I prayed, 'O holy Mother, pity me!'

And pity did not come. And yet again
Of my own saint, Antonio, I implored,
'O Saint Antonio, help me!' And no help
Came. And still, fainting, unto all the saints
I cried, but no one heard me.—And at last
Sinking into the darkness,—one last cry,
'O Jesus, save me!' and methought I died.

But I woke up again, and it was light,
And in the light a face was close to me,
And lo! it was the face of Jesus Christ;
Not as He hangs upon the crucifix,
But as I saw Him once upon a wall
In the priest's house, and now beheld again,
Healing the sick, and working miracles,
With a smile such as called the dead to life,
And a face glad for its own mercy's sake:
And straightway all my heart was in one peace.
So my eyes closed again, at rest, but tired:
And when once more they opened the same face
Was still above them, and that face alone;
And I confusedly did recollect
That this was Heaven, and I was with our Lord,
And, much abashed, I sought to kneel to Him,
But could not; but I struggled to find breath
And say, Lord, pardon me! at which a voice
Sweet as the face, made answer unto me:
'Lie still, and be not troubled; I am come
To be thy servant;' and it was so sweet,

I heard and felt no more. But when again
My eyes unclosed themselves, I saw the face
Still bending over me ; but now my sense
Was clearer, and I could perceive that I
Was in my own home, laid on my own bed
Of goatskins, and the rafters overhead.
And still the vision stayed before my sight,
Nor did the comfort of it pass from me.
And by degrees I came to know that he,
Whose arms I felt around me, had the form
And habit of a monk, and wore a cross
Upon his breast. But I could neither speak,
Nor understand ; and so, for many days,
I lay half-conscious betwixt life and death.
But whensoever I was full aware,
I knew that that same friend was at my side,
Holding my spirit by his powerful eyes
From sinking, and my body by his arms.
And as the floods of fever ebbed away,
The dream and the reality grew one ;
And I knew only one thing in the world,
Sleeping or waking, present still to me ;
The face, the voice, the hand that tended me,
And ministered unto me night and day.
And by the time I was so far myself
As to know right that he was neither saint
Nor angel, but a mortal man like me,
I had grown too to know that God had sent
To save His lowest, him who was His highest,

The flower and miracle of all mankind,
The like of whom was not on all the earth.
I was no longer anything but his,
Heart, soul, and spirit, who had brought me back
From death. And this was Ugo Bassi's self.

And still I marvel how so great a grace
Was sent to one unworthy, that even he
In my extremity to me was brought.
But in God's providence it came to pass
That news of our distress had reached to Rome,
Where he and others of Saint Barnabas
Dwelt in Community, bound under rule,
To succour of the sick and perishing.
And twelve among the brotherhood were sent
My master being one ; and they arrived
To our relief, at our extremest need,
When none remained of us, except a few
Dying and starving. Nor can I relate
With what an overflowing power and love
They wrought among us ;—comforting the sick,
Until the dying hands were laid in theirs,
Peacefully, or the first reviving smiles
Of eyes awoke from death looked up to them.
And those who died they buried full of hope ;
But few died after, for when they appeared,
The fever stayed : and now the year had turned,
And the new spring began to shine on earth.
Also they wearied not, but strengthened still

The hands of those surviving, taking charge
Of all our scattered lives, replenishing
Our stores, collecting on the waste hill-sides
The remnants of our flocks, and sowing fresh
Our empty fields. Moreover, by their words,
Preaching and praying, they did so prevail
Upon our hearts, that melted as we heard,
That we through our affliction seemed more near
To God, and somehow, following after them,
Felt that a Father held us by the hand.

And now that hope with the new year had come
Back to Cialdolè, and Easter Day
Drew near, they got them ready to depart
For Rome again. But I, when first I heard
That they were going, felt my heart stand still,
And all was cold within me like a stone.
It did not seem that I could live and see
Fra Ugo Bassi never any more:
I had not suffered such sharp pain before,
And now I wished that I had died as well.
And as I sat, and wept, Fra Ugo came,
And said to me, 'Why weepest thou?' and I
Answered him, 'Sir, thou goest:'—and he took
My hand in his, and looked into my face,
And smiled as if no care had ever crossed
The lovely lips, and leant, and spake to me,
And said, 'Come with me!' and I answered him,
'Yea, sir, to death,' and then my heart revived.

And all the comfort wrapped me round again.
And he said to me, 'Wherefore need we part?
For verily I love thee; and thyself
Hast need of me, and thou hast none besides.
But wilt thou leave thy father's house, and all
The old familiar country of thy youth,
The freedom of the open hills, to dwell
In a dark house, enclosed by city streets;
To serve among the sick and miserable,
In labour and subjection, day by day,
Under a strict rule?' 'Sir,' I answered him,
'If I may sometimes see your face, I will;
And I will bless you for your charity
In taking me, whatever comes of it,
So I but be with you;—and I will serve
With all my strength, and will rejoice to serve
For truly, if you left me, I should feel
That God had left me too.' And so he spake
To the chief brother, that I should return
To Rome with them, as a lay-servitor
Within their hospital. So all of us
Set off together, walking from the hills;
And when we reached the valley underneath,
We took our places in a bullock-wain,
To carry us along the road to Rome.

Slowly we journeyed all that day;—the form
Of the hill-side was ever in our sight,
Though shifting as we moved. But as I gazed

And gazed upon the lovely, changing hills,
The distance grew between us, and I felt
A yearning, sinking pain about my heart,
As though I saw again my dearest ones
Dying before my eyes. I had not guessed
What this new pain would be. And suddenly
The mountain-face whereon I had my home
At a sharp winding of the road stood out
All full and clear upon us, golden-blue
Amid the sunset, calling, clasping me,—
There was my mother!—and as suddenly
Vanished for ever, as another turn
Took us between the foldings of the hills.
And in that moment I had said farewell
For ever to my youth and liberty,
And to the country of my youth.—Farewell,
Cialdolè! the hill that nearest heaven
Lies ever, under the blue sky, or cloud;
Where the larks sing, and the wild goats rejoice,
And locusts whirr in the hot summer day,
And all life goeth joyously,—farewell!
For some whom I have loved and lost on earth,
I shall yet find again, I think, in heaven,
But never, in heaven or earth, Cialdolè!

And all that night I wept. But the next day
All things were new, and the spring sunshine streamed
On the luxuriant loveliness of earth.
And as we went along our way, my heart

Grew lighter, and I much rejoiced to be
In such good company, and in the thought
Of the great things I was about to see.
The brethren too were glad upon the way,
As for a respite from laborious days;
And as we passed in shadow of the groves,
Now ringing with ten thousand nightingales,
Or over shadowless slopes of sheeted gold,
Glittering with waters, fresh and blue in Lent,
They held much pleasant converse, manifold;
Things good to hear, but for my ignorance
Too hard to understand; and none of them
Spake with such blithe and such melodious voice
As did Fra Ugo,—but he spake the least,
And mostly silent sat, with happy eyes
Gazing upon the lovely lands of spring.

And as we journeyed downwards from the hills
Unto the valleys, coming to a place
Where sloping sward lay smooth a long way on,
We walked for pleasure, in the morning air,
And sunshine of the morning all around;
The wild bees humming, and the blue and brown
And white moths flitting ever on before,
And calls from unseen birds, and answering
Calls, with a note of music, short and clear.
And little yellow wayside flowers like stars
Were all among the short hill-grasses, mixt
With white cups in a tiny running stream

That one might step across, that fleeted down,
But faster and more lightly, as we went,
With a sweet sound ;—and all the ground beside
Was mossy-soft and springing, and the turf
Flew underfoot for miles along the way.
And from me all the dark and winter time,
And the old days, and the dead loves of youth
Melted away in sunshine, and my heart
Was born again as blithe as birds and bees ;
And I rejoiced and said, 'O sir, the way
I come with you is brighter and more glad
Than any that I knew before ! How clear
The country lies before us ;—and the spring
Is over heaven and earth, and I can feel
God loves us, and will guide us to the end.'
He answered, with a face of happy peace,
Fair as the sunshine, 'Yes, the hour is sweet,
And the way pleasant ;—let us give God thanks
For these good days, and all His gifts of joy,
The lovely shadows of His Paradise,
And let us keep their light within our hearts ;—
But think not all the way will be like this.
If thou elect to cast thy lot with ours,
Going where God shall send thee, day by day,
Be ready sometimes for the rougher road.
And we shall be wayfarers all our life,
—Or I, at least, having purposed not to build
A home on earth,—and none of us may know
Whither our path may lead, except the end.

For there are desert-places, fever-swamps,
And paths where every step is on the verge
Of death, where is no water and no moon,
Where savage beasts go prowling through the night,
Or men more savage, thirsting for their prey.
God is our Father, even there as here,
And sometimes closest in the wilderness.
But every day as we passed farther on,
More beautiful the way grew, through the woods
Of chestnut, and the forests of live oak,
Down to the plains, beside the wandering streams,
Or through the heavy-scented shining maze
Of flowering laurel; and I wished no more
Than so to journey ever. And one day,
About midday, we halted by a lake,
A small lake in the hollow of the hills,
Amidst the blue and yellow water-flags,
Where many herons were wading. And we lay
And rested in the shadow of the pines
Upon the sandy shore; while overhead,
In the clear blue, a long grey flight of cranes
Went sailing to the West; and one looked up
And said, 'They go towards Rome;'—and fearing not
To give offence, I spake out of my joy
Loud to Fra Ugo, 'And we too, and I,
Are going to Rome! Is it, indeed, no dream?
I, plain Antonio Lotti? I shall see
The Holy Father and the Cardinals,
And kiss saints' bones, and see the jewelled dress

Our Lady wears on feast-days, and find grace
Of pilgrimage; they say that one may do
More for one's soul by one day's walk in Rome
Than by a hundred years of penances.
'Tis next to going to Heaven to go to Rome!'
But Ugo did not answer me: for he
Was gazing upwards, and his eyes were fixed
Where now amidst the blazing, quivering light
One golden eagle hovered all alone
Above the lake. But when I ceased to speak,
He spoke in a low voice, as to himself,
Lost in a vision: 'Yea, to Rome, to Rome—
The Great, the Holy City,'—and he sighed;
And such a sadness and a musing fell
Upon his face, that I spake not again.

And as we went, I sometimes wondered much
On what should be the manner of our life
In Rome; and, with a ready cheerfulness,
Fra Ugo answered me, and said: 'Our lot
Is blessed;—without cares or hindrances
To serve our Lord even as He served us,
And left this saying for us, "Inasmuch
As ye have done it to the least of these,
My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."
Thus in His sick and sorrowful do we
Behold and love our Master, Christ, and we
Also behold and love His face in prayer.
And such a sweetness is there, near to Him

In this communion and this ministry,
That all the pleasures of the world seem poor.
And like Saint Francis, girded for the race,
We have no other bride but Poverty ;
And though her face be somewhat grave, yet she
Is fairer than all lust or pride of life
To whomso hath her fast in the embrace ;
And he who once hath held her hand in his
For Christ's sake, and His Church's, doth not think
To loose it, for a king's inheritance.
But of one thing do I forewarn thee now :
That, entering on this service, thou must come
Prepared to all obedience, to deny
Thyself, and daily to take up thy cross,
And willingly to give up thy own will
To theirs, the brethren who rule over thee.
For no hard rule is ours, and we obey
Loving, not fearing ; yet by straitened bonds
Of our necessity, the hourly press
Of work without us, we must needs require
All harmony within, and waste no strength
Upon disputings and perversity.
Our battle is with this world's suffering,
Not with its sin,—that is the higher war,
The office of the Prophet and the Judge ;—
We but console and heal ; and we receive
Among us none who make a life of peace
Impossible, who need not fellowship
And guidance merely, but severe restraint,

And mind and manners ruled afresh ;—for such
The world is wide enough,—but in our walls
Only the helpful and the humble stay.'
I answered : ' Sir, if I may only stay,
And this be exercise of helpfulness,
That I should drag your burdens like a mule,
Or grind your corn, like Samson in the dark,
Or turn a bucket-windlass all day long,—
I will be helpful :—and for humbleness,
If you and all the holy brotherhood
Be pleased to walk upon me for a mat,
And when your meals are done give me the bones
And scraps upon your trenchers for my share,
And if I ask for wages give me blows,—
I will be humble ;—yes, and thankful too ! '
And Ugo laughed, and said, ' You shall be tried.'

Through the fair weather, thus we journeyed on ;
All the land laughed with flowers, and sang with birds :
My heart was light, and seemed a part of them ;
Yet seemed I ever in a holy place ;
Because Fra Ugo's face was in my sight
Ever, and looking on it, it became
My saint's face to me ;—but I spake not this,
Knowing not how, and fearing to offend.
Perhaps the fever in my head had left
Strange fancies ;—for at night I dreamed that all
The lands, and all their riches and delight,
Were mine, and I was lord, and music pealed

Around us feasting, and a dazzling shine,
And roses crowding through the whole bright air ;
But still I shivered with some ache of heart,
And sense of something wanting in the midst ;
And yearning to this unknown need,—behold
The face of Ugo Bassi ! and I sprang
With tears of joy to it, and clasped his hand.
But all the face was changed and full of pain,
And he was pale and bleeding, and the light
Dwindled to moonbeams,—and I saw in it
That heavy chains were on his hands and feet,
And that he lay in prison and the dark.
And fear came on me, and I said to him,
'My Master ! ' and I kissed his hands, and he
Said, 'Go thy ways ; and God be with thee still ;
For I am taken from thee : ' and I said,
'Nay, Master, but let me stay here with thee.'
And he smiled on me, saying, 'Wilt thou then
Stay with me ? Behold here is neither food,
Nor light, nor any sleep. Canst thou then watch
With me this hour ? ' And, weeping, I awoke ;
For with me stayed the pity of his face,
So pallid was it, as with pangs of death ;
And the smile pierced me, for it was as one
Smiles, who forgives his murderers ; and I wept
Till daybreak. And next morning, half-afraid
I felt, to look upon Fra Ugo's face.
But when I met him, he was still the same ;
The quiet happy face that lighted up

As from a sunshine in the heart within,
Rejoicing whomsoever looked on it,
But far more whomsoever it looked on.
And so my foolish visions proved in vain.

And once, when we had journeyed all day through
A country, where no houses and no trees
Appeared, but only broken walls of stone,
And ancient arches tufted with young green,
We passed by rolling ridges, hill and dale,
All like one flowering meadow long in grass,
Where poppies grew, and every flower of field;
And taller than the rest, the moonlight spires
Of asphodel rose out of glossy tufts
In straight white armies; and our wheels crushed out
Sweet odours from the herbage as we went;
And myriads of the great-eyed butterflies
Hovered above the white and yellow blooms,
And fluttered through the grasses silver-flowered,
Filled with the noise of grasshoppers and flies.

Now it was nearing sunset, and beside
A little rivulet the oxen stood
To drink, and rested. All around their heads
The gathering cloud of the mosquitoes hummed,
Golden amid the level light that streamed
To left of us, and lighted up one side
Of each black garment, and of each man's face.
There was great silence, and we plainly heard

The oxen chewing hard in the wet grass.
I was aware that all one way were set
The faces of the company, and all
Gazed onward straight; and I too gazed that way.
And in the farthest light the eye could reach,
Low down on the horizon, I beheld
Against an orange sky a purple cloud;
A cloud that did not change, nor melt, nor move.
And still there were faint shadows in the cloud,
A mystery of towers, and walls, and hills,
And the shadow of a great dome in the midst
All purple—and I knew that it was ROME.

II.

"ROMA—AMOR,—the mystic letters run,
Spelled backwards by the Sibyl ages since,
And written so in sight of all men's eyes,
But never read till now; and even now
The vision is but for the Prophet's eye,
And to the world the riddle still remains;"
So speaks our Greatest.' These were Ugo's words,
But then, as now, I understood them not.

I only knew of Rome, that I was there:—
A great, strange city, lovelier in its lights
Than all the golden greenness of the hills;
And in its shadows, glorious far beyond
The purple dropping skirts of thunder-cloud.
A city of all colours, and fair shapes,
And gleams of falling water, day and night;
Resonant with bells, and voices musical;
Lit up with rainbow fountains in the day,
Lit up with rain of coloured stars by night;
Where one might wander each day and be lost,
And every day find some new wilderness;
And full of some invisible, strange charm

Of presence—what, I know not ;—but it seemed
As if the air was breath of many souls
Sighing together in a speechless hymn,
In a long sadness, that was yet not pain.
I never once could feel alone in Rome ;
The sense of some one greater than myself
Was with me in all places, making life
Solemn at all times. In Abruzzo were
The sunsets full of golden peace ; but here
Splendours vermilion streamed across the West,
As one vast cloud of angels and of saints.

Now life woke in me with new consciousness,
Awful and sweet ; for heretofore had I
Lived as the goats lived, and the summer streams,
With gladness flowing from the morning sun,
The happy Pagan life among the hills ;
And felt no more :—but in me now was born
A human soul and human fellowship,
And with the sense of man, the need of God.
A service and a purpose came to me
In every day, and every day was linked
On to another, onwards into days
Beyond this life. Now, too, I prayed to God,
Because without it life became too hard :
But I forgot the old prayers I had made,
Unthinking, to the Saints ; and in my heart,
An image then began to dwell of One
Who among men was Man ; yet perfectly

Did manifest the Word of God; and left
These words to us, 'Lo, I remain with you,
Always, to the world's end:' and I began
To feel Him with us, and to live and move
As in His sight, and to be glad of it,
Though ignorantly. But this sense I caught
From Ugo, from my Master, for himself
So shadowed forth in every look and act
Our Lord, without Whose Name he seldom spoke,
One could not live beside him, and forget.

But, Ugo Bassi, I keep talking on
Of him, and have not told his history;
And truly, little of it do I know,
For seldom spake he of himself, and none
Among us spent much time in idle talk.
This have I heard: his mother was a Greek,
His father Felsinean; and they had
No other son; and his baptismal name
Was Joseph, like the great Italian Chiefs.
But when he joined the Confraternity
Of the Apostle Barnabas, he took
The name of Ugo, as in memory
Of a great poet surnamed Foscolo,
Who had loved Italy, and for her sake
Had suffered loss of all things, and of life,
And had been buried in a foreign land.
And Ugo was in many foreign tongues
Learned above his brethren; and all arts

Were easy to him, and in every one
No scholar's, but a master's hand appeared.
The Music of his Masses still is heard
At Naples, and the songs that first he sang,
Are sung in mournful memory to-day
By many a convent-wall and fountain side;
And pictures from his hand are guarded close
In many a reverent chamber, shedding light
And bloom of beauty through a gloomy place.
And, beautiful in outward grace, a charm
Dwelt on him, the beloved of all eyes.
But all things he forsook, to give himself
To ministry among the poor and sad;
And now, still young, for many years his life
Had been amongst them, wheresoever need
Was bitterest, and the heart was pierced the most;
And mighty gifts of healing, and great power
For soul and body's aid and comforting
Went with him in the toilsome way he trod.
Wherever called him the most hopeless cry,
Wherever want most sad, and pain most sore,
Through the dark hours his steadfast watchings wore.
The touches of his tenderness were spent;
Till from the saved, the succoured, the consoled,
One voice of blessing clung around his name.

And early did his fame of eloquence
In preaching spread abroad; for when he spoke
He seemed inspired, and all who heard and saw

Were drawn into a height beyond themselves.
Hither and thither was he sent to preach,
And minister meanwhile to the distrest,
By his Superiors; and he wrought his tasks
As he was bidden; but a living fire,
Swift as the cloven tongues of Pentecost,
Began to show itself, beyond the rules.

But chiefly in the city of his youth,
Bologna, did his heart unfold itself,
Moving all hearts that heard in unison.
And not without offence; —for once in Lent,
When fame of him began to get abroad,
He was appointed preacher in the Church
Of San Petronio, which was duly held
A high distinction for so young a priest;
And all the dignitaries of the Church
Were there to hear the youthful orator,
Besides a throng of people of all ranks.
And in the midst, full in the altar lights,
Sat the archbishop, splendid in his robes,
Cardinal Oppizzoni, lending grace
Of his most venerable countenance
To the occasion. And the clear voice rose,
And silence fell on all the multitudes,
Till he and they alike were rapt away,
Forgetting all things, save that God was near.

But, speaking of repentance, and its works,

Not its words only, he with his heart full
Of what he had seen and heard and dwelt among
At Rome, spake out, with bitter vehemence,
Of the unchecked corruptions of the priests;
Adjuring them in fierce, bold words, 'Beware!
Ye wolves that feed upon the flock of Christ,
And call yourselves the shepherds!' and at this,
The face of the Archbishop suddenly
Changed as if palsy-stricken, and grew pale
And grey, above the purple and the gold:
And all the people gazed and saw him change
And tremble, and a sudden shiver ran
Across them, and they felt as if a bomb
Had fallen, and some trouble were at hand.

And the next day a council was convoked,
The Cardinal-Legate, Ugo Spinola,
Presiding, and a messenger was sent
To Rome, to ask suspension and rebuke
For the presumptuous preacher; and himself,
Summoned before them, met them all arrayed
In frowns against him, and in menaces.

But Mauro Cappellari, who was styled
Gregory the Sixteenth, at that time Pope,
Aforetime at Bologna in the schools
Had marked the rare gifts and the noble brow
Of Giuseppe Bassi, and had said,
'If the Church win him, he will be to her

An ornament;' and had disposed things so,
That he was led to dedicate himself.
And afterwards, when he had found the monks
Not as he dreamed, and they had forced his mind
To disillusion, he still fresh in youth,
Still ardent, still of boundless faith in men,
Would fain have parted from them, and returned
Back to his home: but Cappellari then,
Astute and sympathetic, wrought on him,
As his confessor, and so comforted,
Urged, and encouraged him, that he remained.
And now, the Pope, knowing his inmost heart,
And tender of the young remembered face,
Befriended him; and would not pass on him
Any hard sentence; only, bade them watch
His words henceforward, and to send him back
To Rome at Easter.

And in May he sent
For him to audience; and admonished him
Mildly, and bade him be more circumspect.
And Ugo, being young, took the reproof
Submissively; and set himself awhile
To silence and retirement, and no more
Spake openly, but studied much alone.
But the Archbishop was not satisfied;
For the offence was serious, and he said,
'He is a young man, I an old;—but wait!
I bide my time—we Cardinals live long.
The end is not yet come.' But Ugo stayed

At Rome: and, of his books the one he loved
The most, and lived the most with, I have heard,
Was this, in Greek, the Gospel of our Lord;
And next he communed with the works of him
Whom all the scholars think so great a man,
Dante; and with some English poets too,
Two famous men whose names I have forgot,
But one wrote plays, and the other died in Greece.
In stillness he abode; and as the dew
Feeds the white lilies in a lonely wood,
And the earth's strength is drawn into the corn,
And in dark caves the sapphires crystallise,
So were the spirits of the elements
Of Nature, and of other noble minds,
Into his spirit wrought in solitude
By one diviner Spirit quickening all,
Until the starry flower of his own soul
Blossomed into its own clear shape and light;
Not cut and stamped according to the lines
Of his high priests:—and when he spake again,
He did not please them better than before.

And one Lent service, he officiating
By order, at Palermo, in the Church
Dell' Olivella, day by day the hearts
Of all the city, drawn to penitence,
Melted before him, listening to the voice,
And gazing on the young angelic face,
That pierced them with the message of the Lord,

And then uplifted them, saying, ' Look on Christ!
Behold the Cross whereon your sins and mine
Have bound Him! Listen to the lips that said,
" Forgive them!" Listen to them, saying still,
" Come unto Me, and I will give you rest."
O broken hearts, O sorrowful and poor,
Come unto Him Who came to bring you life!
Hold fast by His good tidings of great joy,
Have no more fear, for God is here with man,
Yea, light and love,—the Cross of Jesus Christ!
And the face grew transfigured in their sight,
And the eyes grew like the glory that they saw,
And something of the light and of the peace
Passed from his soul into the souls of them.
And all the people loved, and clung to him;
And many sinful souls were brought to Christ,
That April, in Palermo, by his word.
But when the day came that he must depart,
Multitudes followed with him to the shore,
And kissed his hands, and wept to part with him.
But he embarked in a slow-sailing ship,
And came to Naples. And as he arrived,
The rumour met him, blown by swifter wings,
' The new Black Pestilence, the Cholera,
Is at Palermo, suddenly burst out,
And the black flag is flying over her.
And all have fled who can, but those who stay
No more may pass the barriers, land or sea.
They die by hundreds in the streets by day,

They bury them by hundreds in the night.'
And he was sad ; but those who greeted him
Said, ' We give thanks to God thou hast escaped :
A little later would have been too late.'
But still he mused and saddened ; and at last
He spake, ' I must go back, and be with them !
They love me, and I love them, and their need
Is come—I cannot rest away from them.'
And all dissuaded him, but he : ' My vow
And office gives me access unto them.
Deny me not !' And the Archbishop said,
' Go, if God calls thee :—yet I shall not see
Thy face again, it fears me ; easily
May one go in, but hardly may return,
But yet I may not keep thee, if thy will
Be set to go.' So he took ship again
Back to Palermo : and, with yearning eyes,
Stood on the deck, and watched, as he drew near
The glittering marble City of the South ;
And saw the palm-trees in her gardens stand,
Approaching ; and a breeze came from the land,
And odours of pomegranate and of balm
Came wafted, with the sound of funeral bells.

And steadily they clave the water-lines,
Opal and sapphire shifting on the floor
Of glassy sea, that melted on a shore
White with shell-pearl, and pink with coralline.
And there he landed, past the harbour-bars

Of quarantine ; but all the quays were filled
Already with pale people of the town,
Who knew that he was coming, though no word
Had been sent on to give them news of it.
(Did no one ever need a face so much,
They could but lie and wait, and send for it
The strong magnetic call across the earth
Of spirit unto spirit, knowing not
Where they might find it, how it might be reached ;
Until one moment unawares the door
Was opened, and that face was over them ?)
And all in passionate tears they broke, and kissed
His garments, and embraced his hands and feet ;
And through the stricken city passed a thrill
Electric, and the hearts of all revived.
Some who were dying answered those who told,
' It is enough :—we have lived to see once more
The face of Ugo Bassi !' and some said,
' Welcome the cholera, if it brings him back.
Now know we God is with us in the fire ;
For He hath sent His messenger to walk
The strait way with us ;—as the souls that sang
" Glory to God," amid the whitening flame
Along the highest wall of Purgatory,
So let us suffer, and be purified,
Rejoicing in this solemn fellowship.'

But he on foot passed upwards from the port,
Followed by many friends : and whosoe'er

Had looked upon the glory of that day
In Sicily beneath the summer sun,
Would not have dreamed that Death was reigning there
In shape so terrible ;—for all the road
Was like an avenue of Paradise,
Life, and full flame of loveliness of life.
The red geraniums blazed in banks breast-high,
And from the open doors in the white walls
Scents of magnolia and of heliotrope
Came to the street ; filmy aurora-flowers
Opened and died in the hour, and fell away
In many-coloured showers upon the ground ;
Nebulous masses of the pale-blue stars
Made light upon the darkness of the green,
Through openings in the thickets overarched ;
Where roses, white and yellow and full-rose,
Weighed down their branches, till the ground was swept
By roses, and strewn with them, as the air
Shook the thick clusters, and the Indian reeds
Bowed to its passing with their feathery heads ;
And trumpet-blossoms pushed out great white horns
From the green sheath, till all the green was hid
By the white spread of giant-blowing wings.
In the cool shadow heaps of tuberose
Lay by the fountains in the market-place,
Among the purple fruit. The jalousies
Of the tall houses shut against the sun
Were wreathed with trails of velvet-glossy bells ;
And here and there one had not been unclosed

Yesterday, and the vivid shoots had run
Over it in a night, and sealed it fast
With tendril, and bright leaf, and drops of flower.
And in and out the balconies thin stems
Went twisting, and the chains of passion-flowers,
Bud, blossom, and phantasmal orb of fruit
Alternate, swung, and lengthened every hour.
And fine-leaved greenery crept from bower to bower
With thick white star-flakes scattered ; and the bloom
Of orient lilies, and the rainbow-blue
Of iris shot up stately from the grass ;
And through the wavering shadows crimson sparks
Poised upon brittle stalks, glanced up and down ;
And shining darkness of the cypress closed
The deep withdrawing glades of evergreen,
Lit up far off with oleander pyres.
Out of the rocky dust of the wayside
The lamps of the aloes burned themselves aloft,
Immortal ; and the prickly cactus-knots
In the hot sunshine overleant the walls,
The lizards darting in and out of them ;
But in the shadier side the maidenhair
Sprung thick from every crevice. Passing these,
He issued on to the Piazza, where
The wonder of the world, the Fountain streams
From height to height of marble, dashing down
White waves for ever over whitest limbs,
That shine in multitudes amid the spray
And sound of silver waters without end,

Rolling and rising and showering suddenly.
There standing where the fig-trees made a shade
Close in the angle, he beheld the streets
Stretch fourways to the beautiful great gates;
With all their burnished domes and carven stones
In wavering coloured lines of light and shade.
And downwards, from the greatest of the gates,
Porta Felice, swept the orange-groves;
And avenues of coral-trees led down
In all their hanging splendours to the shore;
And out beyond them, sleeping in the light,
The islands, and the azure of the sea.
And upwards, through a labyrinth of spires,
And turrets, and steep alabaster walls,
The city rose, and broke itself away
Amidst the forests of the hills, and reached
The heights of Monreale, crowned with all
Its pinnacles and all its jewelled fronts
Shining to seaward;—but the tolling bells
Out of the gilded minarets smote the ear:—
Until at last, through miles of shadowy air,
The blue and violet mountains shut the sky.
All this he looked upon, and so the earth
Smiled upon him farewell as it might be.
And then he turned aside, and entered in
The hospital of San Dominico.
But it was a long time, and all the year
Had changed, before he crossed the door again.

God did not stay His hand for many days :
Though lamps were lit at all the shrines, and prayers
Were made unceasing, also many vows.
And the fair statue of the virgin saint,
That smiles in sleep, was carried through the town,
Wreathed with her Roses ; but it was in vain.
And little was it any art could do
Among the sick ;—some lived and others died ;
All suffered. And a blind and groundless mass
Of terror, in this new and unforeseen
And unappeasable calamity,
Made it the heavier. Panic-stricken, most
Remained because a strong arm barred them in ;
And selfish fear, nurtured of ignorance,
Had hold of them alike within, without ;
And none whose hearts were not as strong as death
Through love or courage or despair of life,
But held aloof from contact with the sick.
The hospitals were crowded down the floors
With those who lived through agony, or died,
Without a hand to help them in their need ;
And many a life flickered away for want
Of aid sufficient ;—while yet more poured in,
Heaped one on other, till the doors were choked.
And all one chaos of heart-rending pain,
Helpless dismay, confusion, and despair :
And many people died from fear alone.

But Ugo entered in, and all was changed.

Not only the unwearied foot and hand
Skilled in all service, and the eyes that seemed
To strike straight through in every part at once ;
But also the commanding ease of sway
That stilled the tumult of the stricken throng,
And carried calm and order through the ranks
Of those that served, and was a stay to all.

The strong sweet voice that made pain possible
Without its sorrow, the illumined eyes
That bent above the dying with the light
Of victory, the unshrinking tender hand,
Were as the soul of all the suffering days.
And peace and patience came, and courage too,
Living or dying ; and the gates of heaven
Were terrible, but glorious ; for this side,
Also, the angels stood, and held the posts.
Long hours of darkness thrilled from eve to dawn,
With one vibration of the voice that passed
With four low words ; the dying waited on
Through heavy, fainting hours for one more look,
One more of his, the last, and when it came,
Found that the tide had turned within their veins.
And kneeling on the floor (for other bed
Was not, for some), he held within his arms
One between life and death ; who, falling off
In languid stupor either sleep or death,
Still lay there heavily, the powerless head
On Ugo's breast, and neither stirred at all ;

And the light faded, and still Ugo knelt
Cramped, motionless ; and many hours went by ;
Until the sick man woke alive and saved ;
But Ugo sickened—nor that time alone.
For he, in course of that long troublous time,
Three times was stricken by the cholera,
Three times passed through an agony like death,
And three times slowly battled back to life.
And when at last the pestilence had ceased,
He left Palermo ; and came back again
To his own country, and returned to all
Obedience under an embittered rule.

And in all places where one mother-tongue
Made men Italians, fame of him was found,
As of the greatest preacher of the time.
And many noble cities sent for him
To hold the office of the Forty Days
In their cathedrals ; and in those spring days
The multitudes were gathered year by year
To hear him : and the vast Basilicas
(Lighted but by the thousands of the eyes
Fixed on his face, and by the one pale face
That rose above them fronting, paler yet
From passion of the prayer than from the fast)
Thrilled through their shadows as the low tones fell
First on the ears that waited ;—gathering power
As soul enkindled soul, and silence grew
Deeper to pain, beneath the ringing voice,

That filled the air at last and overbore
And overwhelmed in one resistless flow
Of penitence, of pardon, and of peace ;
Till the strained silence broke with sound of sobs,
Where hearts were breaking at the feet of Christ.
And from the doors the people passed, but were
No more the same ;—an angel's hand had held
Theirs, and the pulse had quickened under it
To life-blood heat of holiness ;—old feuds
Of families were buried with the past ;
And orphan children at the stranger's hearth
Found tenderness mixed with their daily bread ;
And usurers sought out the homes of those
Stripped by their gains, and brought them back their own ;
And women took the mock-rose from their cheeks,
And, wan with weeping, walked with purer eyes.
And souls set free from sin, and hearts absolved,
Clung with a grateful passion round the man
Whose voice had made God manifest to them.
And by the natural gifts that in him dwelt
Unconsciously, and looked out from his eyes,
And by the mighty deeds that he had wrought,
Such chains were fashioned between them and him,
Forged fast in such a glowing fire of faith,
As all the world could neither break nor bend.
The multitudes thronged round him, though he prayed
For quiet, they heaped flowers before his feet,
Until Bologna's streets were ankle-deep ;
(Ah, fond and foolish ! yet another day,

And you shall see him passing through your streets
When all the flowers are faded). As he passed,
The nobles threw their mantles in his path,
And stood bareheaded; all the night was loud
With songs, to do him honour; and when he
Preached in the great church metropolitan,
Saint Peter's, they had need to keep the gates
With guards; and all the way along the nave,
From the chief doors beside of which the rude
Great lions of the red Verona stone
Keep always at their posts, up to the arch
That crowns the altar with its blazonry,
(The last work of Caracci overhead,
Where the Annunciating Angel bows
Before the Virgin), stood a double line
Of soldiers, forcing back the multitude
To make a passage for him; for indeed,
There was such pressure to catch sight of him,
Or touch his hand, that there was danger feared,
And felt.

But all this had not come to pass,
Without much envy, clamour, and alarm
Among the priests. They did not dare to stem
The flood of popular passion at full tide
Now in Bologna; they took counsel long
Together, they prepared their snares for him,
And waited opportunity to fall
Upon him; and they trembled as he spoke,

For hatred: but they feared the people most,
And of all people, most the Bolognese.

But when he left Bologna, and retired
For quiet to Perugia, they perceived
Their time was come: and they let loose on him
Their charges, of sedition, heresy,
Presumption, and whatever else would serve;
Besides some more, of pure malevolence
Invented, to defame his spotless life:
(Though Padre Venturini, Spisni too,
The Father-General of the Barnabites,
And all the heads of the Order stood by him
And testified his blamelessness of all).
But mostly they of the Dominicans,
And of the Company of Jesus, were
Against him; and it was resolved at Rome
To crush the preaching and the preacher too,
As privately as might be possible.

Cardinal Lambruschini, Genoese,
(Himself a friar of the Barnabites,
And General of the Order formerly),
Secretary, and known throughout the States
For his severity and vigilance,
And double-dealing, wrote in the meantime
To the Superior of the monastery
Situate at San Severino, thus:

'Most Reverend and Well-Beloved in God:
We hereby, in the Holy Father's name,
Consign to your authority and charge,
Subject to utmost rigour of your rule,
A friar of the Barnabites, by name
Ugo, and surnamed Bassi; him of whom
Doubtless reports have reached you much of late.
You understand the reason he is sent
To you, and what a special confidence
The Holy Father here vouchsafes to you.
This man, although himself he is not given
To disputation or to argument,
And is himself contented with his Church,
And works on men's hearts rather than their minds,
Yet ever dwelling on the name of Christ,
And putting those things last which should be first,
He sows broadcast the seeds of heresy,
Besides suspicion of a darker sort,
Connection with the new political
Secret societies; a charge, which I,
Having investigated, do not hold
True, but yet choose to act as if it were:
Do you the same—the man is dangerous.

'If God were pleased to call him quickly hence,
It would be a great mercy to the Church;
But that is where we cannot interfere.
You cannot touch his heart; look to his mind.
Though an enthusiast he is not a fool;

But might be made so, for the finer brain
Is the more delicate, and may be dealt
More subtly with ;—and there are many ways.
Look that he come not out as he goes in.
You have the means,—you have full liberty
To use them all,—and the result will count
In your advancement. Do not seek at all
To move his bent of spirit ; take no heed
Of anything he says or does or thinks,
Except to mark where most the points will hit :
Nor nurse a self-complacent stubbornness
By a direct severity ;—let that
Be used unsparingly and ceasing not,
But never for the cause where it is due.
Pass over that ; and dwell continually
Upon the charges that you know are false,
And let them be the ground of everything.
He is as innocent as is a child ;
If he were not, he could do little harm ;
And you can hurt him more by the very name
Of evil which his soul abhors, than all
Your penitential offices can do
To the more hardened sinners sent to you
For scandalous offences. Mix him up
With these, and let them take their share with you
In humbling him ; give him for intercourse
These gross companions, and reprove them all
Together ; take occasion to point out
That he is worst of them ; and add besides,

That he to all his other sins has joined
Hypocrisy, and used a saintly mien
For cloak of vice,—while they, the lesser sort,
Have but erred frankly; set them on to take
The lesson up and carry out themselves;
And let them mitigate their own deserts
By such vexations as they can inflict,
The coarser on the finer. It will be
Easy to find a pretext in his face,
(Which people say is like a pictured saint's),
For taunts and bitter speeches, and such stings
As strike the sharpest, being falsehood dipt
In truth;—this humble and pure-seeming priest
Looks not,—as you will say,—the thing he is,
A brawler and blasphemer and the rest.
And when you have him at the lowest point,
Body and soul, starved out and beaten down,
Then let him find a sympathising ear
At hand, once only, in some lonely hour,
And let him pour out all his heart to him,
Finding a gentle listener, and a kind
Half-helpful voice; and let him brood on this
Unlooked-for secret solace, some pale days
Tinged with an aching hope; and suddenly
Confront him with the sympathising friend
Turned enemy, and bringing all his words
Against him, adding here and missing there
Whatever may convert them to offence,
And evil-hatching import undesigned

Bring him to see the one face he has found
Tender, with long-laid malice mocking him
In his betrayal ; and when so his heart
Sinks stricken from its last faint trust in man,
And the broken spirit craves some resting-place,
Some hour of respite from the torturing hands,
Then take your time ;—then find in this the ground
For fresh severities ; and heap on him
All that humiliation, pain, and want
Can pour on one already broken down.
And let him read his shame in every eye,
And let suspicion follow every least
Motion or act of his.
You will not have
Much trouble with him ; his obedience lies
Deeper than pride, or self, or any wrong ;
His meekness is a fault,—and yet his fault
Is overboldness ;—you will know the man ;
One of those ardent minds who suffer pain,
And call it pleasure, so it be but borne
For one they love, and above all, for God :
Who, if they can but fancy they are right,
Are sure to beat you with a smile at last,
Just when you have them safest under heel.
Take from him all pretence of pride in this ;
Give him no choice ; and always much insist
Upon the mildness of his punishment,
And gratefulness for the indulgence shown.

'Confuse him every way; admonish him
Wide of the mark; and never answer him
According to his reasons; let him chafe
Ever beneath a *wrong*; and still the more
He tries to make a clear straightforward case,
Twist it the more to some unlooked-for sense
Of ill-intention; till himself begin
To doubt himself and his own sense at all,
And to regard his own high-flying views
As mere conceits and fancies of the brain.

'But in whatever state he comes from you,
(For he must not die with you,) I expect
At least, that there shall be no more of that
Exuberant fervour and self-confidence,
Which holds the multitude enthralled by him;
Nor of that vigorous courage in the blood,
Which sees a doom, and marches up to it;
Nor of that springing fountain in the heart
Of inward sunshine, so that people say,
(Profanely, people of the lower sort),
They look on him, and straightway it appears
As if a hundred candles at a saint's
Shrine had been lighted up all suddenly,
And in the midst of them the saint himself:—
I trust to you to see he smiles no more.

'His Holiness, (who if he only could
Be fallible, would err in this alone,

Over-indulgence), has been much inclined
To favour and forgiveness ; but at last,
Persuaded that his duty to the Church
Demands a sterner treatment, after much
Consideration, and advice from me,
Sanctions whatever measures you may deem
Advisable :—and many other things
I leave to your discretion. I convey
The blessing of His Holiness to you ;
With protestations of profound esteem
From your most humble and devoted Friend
And Servant, Lambruschini, Cardinal.'

And the same time a missive came to him,
Ugo, likewise, from Rome ; and in this sense :
'Whereas the Holy Father, with great grief,
Has heard of grave disorders in the Church,
Caused by thy preaching, and of scandals raised
Among the populace, in which thy name
Is mixed ; and that thou art accused thyself,
By the Archbishop of thy diocese,
Of rashness, violence, want of modesty,
And private judgment of the Word of God,
With licence to the verge of blasphemy ;
Besides suspicion, not disproved, of some
Conduct disorderly in daily life ;—
Thou art hereby commanded and required
To relegate thyself for penitence
Into the house of the Dominicans,

Within San Severino; and there wait
The sentence of the Church upon the charge.
And, furthermore, if there be any grace
Of dutiful obedience left in thee,
Or of fidelity unto thy vows,
It is required of thee to prove the same
By going freely and alone, without
Appearance of compulsion; and to leave
Such message as will soothe the minds of those
Who call themselves thy friends, and flatter thee,
Upholding thee in thy rebellious pride;
And that thou break off converse with them all;
—Unless it be thy purpose to inflame
Still more the minds of men against thy Church,
And all its lawful heads and ministers.'

And on the hour he rose, and did depart
Secretly, taking no farewell of those
Who loved him, on the way that he was told.
But in Perugia, when they found him gone,
Great clamour rose; and, robbed of him, they went,
Demanding him, and threatening, to the priests;
But he sent back a note in his own hand
To those he left behind him, which was read
To reassure them, and the storm was quelled:
'I go of my free will: let no man seek
To follow, or to find me.' So he passed
Into a desert place;—and truly there
He found the devils waiting for his soul.

Castello di San Severino stands
Above Potenza, with the straggling town,
Borgo San Severino, underneath.
A desolate and solitary place;
In the most bleak and mountainous recess
Of Umbria, with the highest Apennines,
Where the snow lies in summer, rising up
Behind it; and an insalubrious air
Making whoever long abides there gaunt
And melancholy. Thither came one night
The friar Ugo Bassi all alone;
Footsore and faint and famished, from a long
Day's journey over solitary hills;
And pulled the rusty bell beside the gates,
And asked for harbour in the name of Christ.
His place was ready:—Lambruschini's word
Was paramount in all the Roman States,
And in San Severino. Ugo found
His portion carved for him:—and he, resolved
To endure all things for the love of God,
To forgive all things for the love of man,
Found his task hard, and harder, and at length
Sank under it. Of what he suffered there
No record now is left, but these few lines
In his own writing; fragments, which a friend
Gathered, and stored away when he was gone.

'Let me receive this cross as at Thy Hand,
O Lord, in meekness and humility!

Lord, Thou dost know me innocent of what
They bring against me;—they lay to my charge
Things that I know not;—yet this soul of mine,
Sinful and sorrowful stands in Thy sight,
O Holy One, and needs this bitter cup
To purge it:—give me grace to drink thereof,
And patience still to glorify Thy Name,
And thank Thee for Thy chastening, when Thy hand
Is heavy on me, nor complain at all,
Knowing that I have well deserved Thy wrath!

. . . . . .

O Saviour, Who didst give Thyself to die
For us, who loved Thee not,—Who didst forgive
The cruel hearts that did not pity Thee,—
Have mercy on me, help me to forgive!
Let not the wrong prevailing conquer me,
Nor hold my heart in bitterness of wrath.
Let me forgive them; and forgive them Thou;
And bring us soon together in Thy love!

. . . . . .

O Christ, the cross is heavy! Strengthen me,
As Thou wast strengthened! Hold me by the hand
For I am falling, I can bear no more.
My heart is all on fire, and curses them:
I cannot pardon! Everything is dark:
There is no pity in the world for me.
God, too, is cruel.—Is there any God?
There is a crowd of devils round my path,
Mocking me, holding to me, filling me

With voices of their hissing, night and day :
O cast them from me ! I have striven in vain ;
I have no more strength, —they have hold of me.
Christ, by Thy Cross I do adjure Thee now,
Only to give me grace to cling to it !
O lay me in the lowest at Thy feet,
And with Thine own hands smite and do not spare,
But only leave me not !—Thou art not here.
There is no answer :—I am all alone.
O why am I forsaken of Thee thus ?

. . . . . .

O Jesus Christ, if Thou wouldst only turn
Thy face on me, I could endure it all !

. . . . . .

O God, O God, be pitiful to me !
And to my enemies !'—and there the words
Broke off :—but he was changing visibly :
The wan face sharpened into haggardness ;
The weak knees tottered to their daily tasks ;
And never once the sunken eyes were raised ;
And those that watched him said, relenting not,
'A little longer, and he will be dead.'

But the Archbishop of his native place,
Cardinal Oppizzoni, a mild man,
Wrote : 'There will be great scandal if he dies
Under our hands : we must get rid of him
By more judicious methods : and meanwhile
Let it suffice, to keep him safe away

From Rome and from Bologna.' Thereupon
It was agreed to banish him from thence,
(With prohibition henceforth ever more
To preach in the Legations or in Rome),
And send him into the Archbishopric
Of Naples: where he dwelt awhile in peace;
Under protection of the Cardinal-Prince
Caracciolo, who had loved him long.

But when he died, a new Archbishop came
To Naples, one already infamous,
As Michael Savarese, and he joined
This to his wrongs, that he drave Ugo forth.
Who, finding not one safe place for his foot
In Italy, nor one prevailing friend,
Took refuge in Palermo; which indeed,
The city he had done so much to save,
Received him destitute, forlorn, and nigh
To starving. For, set down within the port,
Barefooted, and without the means to buy
Another meal, he had not strength to reach
The Convent of his Order, but sat down
And waited in the market-place, until
Some pious persons passing, he of them
Requested :—'Give me, in the Name of Christ,
An alms, for bread to-day,'—which being given,
He gathered up his strength, and passed along
The well-remembered ways, until he came
Up to the Convent. There he dwelt awhile,

Ministering without pause, to body and soul
Of all who needed ; and beloved of all ;
Nor beloved only, but by natural power
And majesty, invested with a charm
That swayed men to his bidding and regard.

But when the new Pope, Pius, was proclaimed,
And amnesty was granted, and old bonds
Were all relaxed, he went back unopposed
To his own country, and revisited
Bologna ; and in many other towns
Sojourned a little ; but at last abode
In Rome, a little while before our days
Of trouble,—trouble that turned good for me.

And now, still youthful-seeming in his prime,
Dwelt with the Brethren of his Order there ;
—Tranquil at last ;—a small Community,
Most of them Romans ;—but Fra Ugo was
No Roman, rather of the Lombard type ;
He being tall in stature and grey-eyed ;
Gold-threaded hair that rayed from lips and brow
A face not pale, but fair and colourless,
Perfect in feature, and that sometimes smiled
Like the first burst of sunshine after rain.
But O My Master, is it not all in vain !
I write of a face that whoso once hath seen
Remembereth, and whoso hath not seen
Hath seen no other like it, and no words

Of mine can show it him.
And this it was
That made the centre of my world at Rome ;—
A new world and a holy one to me.
The brethren dwelt in an old spacious house
Along a dark street in Trastevere,
Near by the bridge of Saint Bartholomew ;
Few windows were there looking to the street,
And the door opened on a vaulted way ;
But many corridors and windows looked
To its enclosure on the other side,
Where sunshine travelled o'er the walls all day
In quiet ; and one large acacia tree
Grew in the courtyard, blossoming in showers.

A small part only of the old house served
The brethren's needs ; but all the larger rooms,
Lofty and bare, they made their hospital,
In which by night and day they ministered
Unto their sick ;—and these were always full.
And all of them had diligently learnt
The art of healing, and among them were
Some surgeons and physicians much expert.
But mostly those, whom they received within,
Were stricken by diseases, tedious more
Than mortal, needing tenderness and care ;
Or else incurable, and needing but
A refuge for the last sad days of life ;
Or else which poverty and care had bred,

Needing the oil and wine of charity.
And all, as brethren, they compassionately
Waited upon, and tended. Also they
Went out abroad to seek the sick who lay
Helpless in their own homes ; and visited
Those who were bound in prison, or drew near
To dying, whom they succoured, undeterred
By any depth of pain or of despair.
Also it was their duty to bring help
Unto the widow and the fatherless,
And counsel to the weak and ignorant,
And consolation in the name of Christ
To all afflicted persons whomsoe'er.

A house of holy service and of peace
Was this they dwelt in ; living in one bond
Of purity, and brotherhood of love ;
Speaking but little, praying, praising God
With joyful service of the hearts and hands.
All hardly worked and hardly fared alike :
But unto me, the lowest in the house,
Most dull and ignorant, there fell by right
The lowest tasks ; and I most truly found
The life a hard one, strictly ruled and lined,
And having little change or pleasantness.
—To fetch and carry, and to sweep and scour,
To hew wood, and draw water,—but in heaven !
For now I grew to look on heaven itself
As of a kingdom round about ourselves ;

And felt the very sadness and restraint
Part of the higher and more heavenly life.

I hungered, and I wearied, and I pined
Often, and sometimes with vague weakness drooped,
Which Ugo noted; and would often bring,
At supper, his own portion to my side
Of meat and wine, saying to me, 'I am strong;
But thou art weak, for still the fever leaves
Some traces on thee, and our Roman air
Is languid unto thee the mountain-born.
Eat, and thou shalt be strong as well.' And I
Could never disobey him, though the tears
Came to my eyes. But in my saddest time
I would not once have changed back to the life
Of the old times, the free and child-like joy;
So far more dear and sacred had the new
Become to me. I sometimes felt a pang
Shoot through me, as the summer still went on,
And every day more sultry grew the air;
When rising in the morning I passed forth
Out of my narrow chamber, and I pushed
Open the door, with wandering thoughts, and lo!
My hand was, as it seemed, upon the door
Of my own father's house, that opened out
Right on the hill-side; and before me all
The glittering slopes rolled down, wreathed here and
there
With the pale wood-smoke from the new-lit hearths;

And all the air full of the silver threads
Of gossamer, hung thickly on the wet
Wild, myrtle bushes; and the golden wall
Of broom against the rock-face, stirred at times
With twitter of the little mountain-birds;
And overhead, gathered against the sky,
My goats were standing, waiting at the edge
Until my first call sounded; leaping then
From rock to rock so lightly, that they shook
Only the cistus blossom down;—the dawn
Of yet another long unclouded day.
When swiftly in the opening of a door,
All things were changed, and all was dark and bare
In the long gloomy corridor, where through
The open doors the sick and suffering lay;—
And in my ears the call to matin prayers
Before the heavy and monotonous toil
Of the long day. And yet I did but feel,
'It is good for me to be here.' And had
There been no other cause, I could not now
Have borne to leave my master, as I loved
To call Fra Ugo, but rebuking me
He said, 'I am thy Fellow-servant; call
Me Brother, in one Father and one Lord.'
Yet in my heart he was the master still;
Nor in mine only, but in every heart
Of those that knew him;—though he naught assumed,
But was the youngest of the brotherhood,
And had no rule among them, but obeyed,

And took his turn of office with the rest,
In hall, or chapel, or in hospital,
With glad and humble manners, like a child.

And yet, whenever one was dying, he
Prayed for Fra Ugo; and in any house
Where there was mourning, the bereaved implored,
In their first anguish, to Fra Ugo, Come;
And if within the hospital should one
Go under pain of knife or cautery,
He begged the hand of Ugo;—and at night
When any moaned and tossed, and could not sleep,
And it was said to him, 'Whom seekest thou?'
The answer was, 'Fra Ugo.' As he passed,
Involuntary gladness broke around;
As when birds sing because they feel the sun
Is rising; such grace had he in all eyes.
And ever with the same unwearied peace
From one to another down the weary walls,
He moved, unconscious seeming of himself;
Beholding but the sad sick faces turned
To him for succour; or that other face
To which he turned himself, (that you might see
Was shining on him, full and clear to him,
When the rapt eyes grew glorious in their gaze)
That comforted and helped him, and upheld
Him happy, though the tears were in his eyes
For pity. I remember in those days,
Luigi Ambrosoni, an old man,

Half-paralytic, who for many years
Had lain in a dull corner, just between
The window and the wall, and never more
Would move from it :—he said to me, 'We both
Have a good place. God has been good to us
Sending Fra Ugo here. Before he came,
I often wearied much, and longed to go ;
But now I am glad that I have lived so long :
And am content to lie here for as long
As God sees fit, if He will only send
Fra Ugo's voice to greet me once a day !'

And all the brethren loved him well, as one
Beyond themselves, a glory to their house ;
And all the troubles of the days gone by
Were as they had not been ; and quietly
The heavenly life flowed on a little while.
God granted him this boon for love of him,
To dwell at peace among unenvious souls,
Who were content to love him, and to let
His light shine forth, nor vex him with themselves
And their low humours ; but beside him each
Himself seemed lifted to a sweeter calm.

And one day I remember as I passed,
The Prior, an old man, and much beloved,
Said to him : 'We all serve our Lord, my Son,
As the first Deacons ; but amongst us all,
Art thou, for our Saint Stephen, full of faith

And power, our youngest and our best-beloved,
But yet of higher honour than the rest.'
And Ugo flushed a little, and replied :
'My father, you but love me over-well ;
Where are the stones ? For truly, through your love,
And through my brethren's, life is soft to me ;
And I go forth to meet no harder shower
Than of the almond-blossoms overhead.'
But earnestly the aged father gazed
On him, and evenso, his face grew grave,
Murmuring, 'The end is not yet come, my son,—
Is not yet come.' And Ugo went his way ;
But when I met him in the corridor,
A minute later, walking swift and straight,
I started at him,—for it was as though
A sunset streamed upon his face, and all
His hair were backwards blown and golden, by
A wind from the sea ; and he beheld me not ;
With set eyes gazing out, as though he saw
A vision of the Holy Sepulchre,
Most beautiful, most awful.

III.

1848.

Now I heard
Fra Ugo Bassi preach. For though in Rome
He held no public ministry this year,
On Sundays in the hospital he took
His turn in preaching, at the service held
Where five long chambers, lined with suffering folk,
Converged, and in the midst an altar stood,
By which on feast-days stood the priest, and spoke.
And I remember how, one day in March,
When all the air was thrilling with the spring,
And even the sick people in their beds
Felt, though they could not see it, he stood there ;
Looking down all the lines of weary life,
Still for a little under the sweet voice,
And spoke this sermon to them, tenderly,
As it was written down by one who heard :

' "I am the True Vine," said our Lord, "and Ye,
"My Brethren, are the Branches ;" and that Vine,
Then first uplifted in its place, and hung
With its first purple grapes, since then has grown,

Until its green leaves gladden half the world,
And from its countless clusters rivers flow
For healing of the nations, and its boughs
Innumerable stretch through all the earth,
Ever increasing, ever each entwined
With each, all living from the Central Heart
And you and I, my brethren, live and grow,
Branches of that immortal human Stem.

Let us consider now this life of the Vine,
Whereof we are partakers: we shall see
Its way is not of pleasure nor of ease.
It groweth not like the wild trailing weeds
Whither it willeth, flowering here and there;
Or lifting up proud blossoms to the sun,
Kissed by the butterflies, and glad for life,
And glorious in their beautiful array;
Or running into lovely labyrinths
Of many forms and many fantasies,
Rejoicing in its own luxuriant life.

The Flower of the Vine is but a little thing,
The least part of its life;—you scarce could tell
It ever had a flower; the fruit begins
Almost before the flower has had its day.
And as it grows, it is not free to heaven,
But tied to a stake; and if its arms stretch out,
It is but crosswise, also forced and bound;

And so it draws out of the hard hill-side,
Fixed in its own place, its own food of life ;
And quickens with it, breaking forth in bud,
Joyous and green, and exquisite of form,
Wreathed lightly into tendril, leaf, and bloom.
Yea, the grace of the green vine makes all the land
Lovely in spring-time ; and it still grows on
Faster, in lavishness of its own life ;
Till the fair shoots begin to wind and wave
In the blue air, and feel how sweet it is.
But so they leave it not ; the husbandman
Comes early, with the pruning-hooks and shears,
And strips it bare of all its innocent pride,
And wandering garlands, and cuts deep and sure,
Unsparing for its tenderness and joy.
And in its loss and pain it wasteth not ;
But yields itself with unabated life,
More perfect under the despoiling hand.
The bleeding limbs are hardened into wood ;
The thinned-out bunches ripen into fruit
More full and precious, to the purple prime.

And still, the more it grows, the straitlier bound
Are all its branches; and as rounds the fruit,
And the heart's crimson comes to show in it,
And it advances to its hour,—its leaves
Begin to droop and wither in the sun ;
But still the life-blood flows, and does not fail,
All into fruitfulness, all into form.

Then comes the vintage, for the days are ripe.
And surely now in its perfected bloom,
It may rejoice a little in its crown,
Though it bend low beneath the weight of it,
Wrought out of the long striving of its heart.
But ah! the hands are ready to tear down
The treasures of the grapes; the feet are there
To tread them in the winepress, gathered in;
Until the blood-red rivers of the wine
Run over, and the land is full of joy.
But the vine standeth stripped and desolate,
Having given all; and now its own dark time
Is come, and no man payeth back to it
The comfort and the glory of its gift;
But rather, now most merciless, all pain
And loss are piled together, as its days
Decline, and the spring sap has ceased to flow.
Now is it cut back to the very stem;
Despoiled, disfigured, left a leafless stock,
Alone through all the dark days that shall come.
And all the winter-time the wine gives joy
To those who else were dismal in the cold;
But the vine standeth out amid the frost;
And after all, hath only this grace left,
That it endures in long, lone stedfastness
The winter through:—and next year blooms again;
Not bitter for the torment undergone,
Not barren for the fulness yielded up;
As fair and fruitful towards the sacrifice,

As if no touch had ever come to it,
But the soft airs of heaven and dews of earth ;—
And so fulfils itself in love once more.

And now, what more shall I say? Do I need here
To draw the lesson of this life ; or say
More than these few words, following up the text :—
The Vine from every living limb bleeds wine ;
Is it the poorer for that spirit shed?
The drunkard and the wanton drink thereof ;
Are they the richer for that gift's excess?
Measure thy life by loss instead of gain ;
Not by the wine drunk, but the wine poured forth ;
For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice ;
And whoso suffers most hath most to give.

I speak to those who suffer :—they will know,
Better than I, the whole deep truth of it.
I who stand here complete in all my flesh,
Strong in the morning, sleeping fast at night,
Taking the winds of heaven as they blow,
Without a special sense save joy in each,
Am not so much as worthy to stoop down
And kiss the sacred foot-prints of my Lord
Upon the feet of any such a one
As lieth patient here beneath His hand ;
Whom Christ has bound on His own cross, to lie
Beside Him, till Himself shall give release ;
And that shall not be, many a one knows well,
Until his place knows him no more on earth.

The Living Vine, Christ chose it for Himself :—
God gave to man for use and sustenance
Corn, wine, and oil, and each of these is good
And Christ is Bread of Life, and Light of Life
But yet He did not choose the summer corn,
That shoots up straight and free in one quick growth,
And has its day, and is done, and springs no more :
Nor yet the olive, all whose boughs are spread
In the soft air, and never lose a leaf,
Flowering and fruitful in perpetual peace :
But only this for Him and His in one,—
The everlasting, everquickening Vine,
That gives the heat and passion of the world,
Through its own life-blood, still renewed and shed.

God said to Man and Woman, "By thy sweat,
And by thy travail, thou shalt conquer earth :"
Not, by thy ease or pleasure :—and no good
Or glory of this life but comes by pain.
How poor were earth if all its martyrdoms,
If all its struggling sighs of sacrifice
Were swept away, and all were satiate-smooth ;
If this were such a heaven of soul and sense
As some have dreamed of ;—and we human still.
Nay, we were fashioned not for perfect peace
In this world, howsoever in the next :
And what we win and hold is through some strife.

Many are pains of life ;—I need not stay

To count them ;—there is no one but hath felt
Some of them,—though unequally they fall.
But of all good gifts, ever hath been health
Counted the first, and loss of it to be
The hardest thing to bear : I do not speak
Of such imperfect passages of pain
As show us we are mortal, and should stir
Our hearts to greater diligence in life ;—
But such long weakness, and such wearing pain
As has no end in view, that makes of life
One weary avenue of darkened days,
The bitter darkness growing darker still,
Which none can share or soothe, which sunders us
From all desire, or hope, or stir of change,
Or service of our Master in the world,
Or fellowship with all the faces round
Of passing pains and pleasures,—while our pain
Passeth not, nor will pass ;—and only this
Remains for us to look for,—more of pain,
And doubt if we can bear it to the end.

And furthermore, from any other ill,
Except it be remorse, can men escape
By work, the healing of divinest balm
To whomso hath the courage to begin,
Not yielding to the bitterness of grief.
Or if that tyrannously be denied,
And the soul languishes in utter loss,
Still hope of an immortal, better life

Is left to every suffering innocence,
And love of every sweet and noble thing,
Though farther off than the far side of death;
And faith to feed upon, and keep the heart
Alive, through all the winter of this time.

But sickness holds the sick man in a chain
No will can break or bend to earthly use;
Not only holding him in bond of space,
Fixed in a rooted vegetable lot;—
But bond of time, so that the Present makes
All his possession, and he has no part
In any other being, all his nerves
Gathered and fixed in one intensest strain
Upon the Present; and no future bliss,
Nor harmony of past remembrances,
Can draw him from the anguish of the hour,
Or pay him back his loss, if loss it be.
Is it indeed a loss, or is it gain?
His Life is Pain, and he has naught besides:
Most miserable must he be indeed,
If this be wholly evil, as it seems.
But if this be the hardest ill of all
For mortal flesh and heart to bear in peace,
It is the one comes straightest from God's hand,
And makes us feel him nearest to ourselves.
God gives us light and love, and all good things
Richly for joy, and power, to use aright;
But then we may forget Him in His gifts:—

We cannot well forget the hand that holds,
And pierces us, and will not let us go,
However much we strive from under it.

If God speak to thee in the summer air,
The cool soft breath thou leanest forth to feel
Upon thy forehead;—dost thou feel it God?
Nay, but the wind: and when heart speaks to heart,
And face to face, when friends meet happily,
And all is merry, God is also there;—
But thou perceivest but thy fellow's part:
And when out of the dewy garden green
Some liquid syllables of music strike
A sudden, speechless rapture through thy frame,
Is it God's voice that moves thee?—Nay, the bird's,—
Who sings to God, and all the world and thee.
But when the sharp strokes flesh and heart run through
For thee, and not another; only known,
In all the universe, through sense of thine;
Not caught by eye or ear, not felt by touch,
Nor apprehended by the spirit's sight,
But only by the hidden, tortured nerves,
In all their incommunicable pain,—
God speaks Himself to us, as mothers speak
To their own babes, upon the tender flesh
With fond familiar touches close and dear;—
Because He cannot choose a softer way
To make us feel that He Himself is near,
And each apart His own Beloved and known.

Sweet it is when a babe opens its eyes,
Blue, smiling, to its mother's morning kiss.
But thou, when waking to the morning light,
With unrefreshed and aching limbs, mayst feel
The heavy pressure of a constant pain
Upon thy forehead, and the weary brows
Throbbing beneath an unabated load.
Is it not God's own very finger-tips
Laid on thee in a tender stedfastness?
The light and careful touches which to thee
Seem heavy, because measured to thy strength,
With none to spare;—and yet He does not fail
For thy impatience, but stands by thee still,
Patient, unfaltering,—till thou too shalt grow
Patient,—and wouldst not miss the sharpness grown
To custom, which assures Him at thy side,
Hand to thy hand, and not far off in Heaven.
And when the night comes, and the weariness
Grows into fever, and thy anguish grows
Fiercer, and thou beseechest Him with tears,
"Depart from me, O Lord, and let me rest!"
He will not leave thee, He will not depart,
Nor loose thee, nor forget thee; but will clasp
Thee closer in the thrilling of His arms,
No prayer of ours shall ease before their time.
He gives His angels charge of those who sleep:
But He Himself watches with those who wake.

I know that some would here rebuke me, saying:

It is enough to live and move in God
With all Humanity, not seeking self
In any such exclusive special bond,
Which is not common to the whole of life.
And others would take from us even that :
Who deny God at all outside of us ;
Saying, There is no evil and no good,
Nor anything at all, except ourselves,
And self-created modes of our own brain,
For all the living universe of God.
The old false teachers, who at first seemed hard
To nature,—bidding, Crucify the flesh
To save the soul,—were merciful to these ;
For these would crucify the soul itself,
And stifle back upon itself the cry,
And deepest craving of the human heart,—
That which drew Moses to the Mount of Fire,
That which shook David on his couch of tears,
That which upheld Dante to Paradise,
That which saved Byron through the depths of sin,—
The unutterable thirst of man for God,
The immortal part of us, if such there be.
For me, I do not hold so hard a creed ;
Nor would refuse the comfort Christ implored.

I, in the midst of those who suffer so,—
Who needs must somewhat share the daily pain
Which each of ye, Beloved, must endure,
Must also seek some comfort, and some strength

Of hope to live and suffer by ;—and this
Hath God given me, Beloved, for your sakes,
To whom I fain would pass it. Bear with me,
While unto each I seem to speak,—all ye
Who suffer ;—and I see around me none
But suffers, but to whom, with reverence,
These words of mine, these hopes of mine, are due.

If suffering be indeed our Law of Life,
If this world through our fathers' sin and ours,
May not be perfect any more until
The slow development of centuries
Do bring to birth a higher race than we,
It is so much the more a fitting school
Of patience, for the time we must remain,—
Of charity towards fellow-wayfarers
Beside us bearing each his human cross,
In secret or in sight, but each his own ;
And furthermore of hope, the unblamed hope
Of the new world wherein all things are new,
Where only their own works do follow them
Who rest from pain and labour, and by faith
And love have won a nearer step towards God.
Hope thitherward for this life's recompense ;
For here what one sows must another reap,
And children suffer for their fathers' sins
While they live here ; but in that other world
Shall each man reap his own inheritance ;
Such heritage as he has left behind

For those who follow here, who are the worse
Or better for his sojourning with them.

But if it be the worse, if the foregone
Sin of thy parents or some other one's,
(For our lives here are mostly in the power
O' other lives, and each of us is bound
To be his brother's keeper), have made earth
Alien to thee, and poisoned at the fount
The natural springs of joy, and set within
The wheels of life a crook, that never more
Swiftly and smoothly they may turn, and bound
Weights on thy ankles,—what is that to thee,
Who livest not for one time, but for all?
God keeps account of that; only take care
Those same pathetic haunting eyes of thine,
For which some soul doth suffer punishment,
Do meet thee not again in wife or child,
Or sick man at thy gates, or starving man
That wrought thy goodly raiment, or the brute
And ignorant fury of the brotherless,
Whose firebrand lights the roofs of palaces.
Look not on thine own loss, but look beyond,
And take the Cross for glory and for guide.

For one star differeth from another star
In glory and in use; and all are stairs
Of the illimitable House of God;
And every one has its own name and place

Distinguished, and some special word is given
For each to utter in the mystic song
Which is not found in speech of humankind,
Which is not understood by human heart,
Even though heard by those caught up to Heaven,
Who heard and saw, but could not tell the things
Which they had heard and seen,—which neither men
Nor angels, nor the conscious suns of space,
Nor anything created, hears in whole;
But that grows fuller, clearer, as we grow
Nearer to God, with Whom is neither part
Nor pause, Who gathers in one Infinite
All number, sound, and space, and light, and law,
Rejoicing utterly, eternally.

And when God formed in the hollow of His hand
This ball of Earth among His other balls,
And set it in His shining firmament,
Between the greater and the lesser lights,
He chose it for the Star of Suffering.

I think, when God looks down the ranks of Heaven,
And sees them, not as we see, points of fire,
But as the animate spirits of the spheres,
He doth behold the Angel of the Earth,
Stretched like Prometheus on the promontory,
(Upon the outermost verge of rocky seas
That sweep to shadow as they turn in Heaven,
Swept with the earth, but trembling towards the moon),

Bound to a perpetuity of pain,
Willing and strong, and finding in his pain
God, and his one unbroken note of praise
In the full rush of cosmic harmony.

But we are men, not angels. We abide
Not on this earth; but for a little space
We pass upon it: and while so we pass,
God through the dark hath set the Light of Life,
With witness for Himself, the Word of God,
To be among us Man, with human heart,
And human language, thus interpreting
The One great Will incomprehensible,
Only so far as we in human life
Are able to receive it; men as men,
Can reach no higher than the Son of God,
The perfect Head and Pattern of mankind.
The time is short, and this sufficeth us
To live and die by; and in Him again
We see the same first, starry attribute,
"Perfect through suffering," our salvation's seal
Set in the front of His Humanity.
For God has other Words for other worlds,
But for this world the Word of God is Christ.
And when we come to die we shall not find
The day has been too long for any of us
To have fulfilled the perfect law of Christ.
Who is there that can say, "My part is done
In this: now I am ready for a law

More wide, more perfect for the rest of life?
Is any living that has not come short?
Has any died that was not short at last?

The ultimate symbol of Divinity
How can we dream of? we have got no sense
Whereby to seize it: but in Him we touch
The ultimate symbol of Humanity,
Humanity that touches the Divine
By some fine link, intangible to us,
Upon that side of mortal consciousness
That looks towards Death; and we must pass the gates
Of Death, linked with Him, holding by the hand
Our Brother gone before, before we come
To the perception how our life is joined
To God's; for we are now the Sons of God,
And know we shall be like Him there, but what
We shall be doth not yet appear; but when
We see Him we shall know Him as He is.
And who shall be our Angels in the worlds
That lie before us, or what Words of God,
Unknown, unuttered, and undreamt of yet,
May meet us there, how should we know or guess?

And shall we then be restless in the search
For other proofs and witnesses of God,
Before our hearts have rested on the One
He gave us in our very flesh to know?
Impatient for the noonday, shall we miss

The sunrise we shall never see again?
And all the tender colours of the dawn,—
The vision of the crimson clouds that hang
Above us, and the lovely Morning-Star
That will be vanished when the sun is high?

—As children might, impatient of the school,
Despise the letters, longing for the songs
And stories that they catch the echoes of.
The songs are written, but first, learn to spell!
The books will keep,—but if we will not learn,
We shall not read them when the right time comes,
Or read them wrongly and confusedly.
And each hour has its lesson, and each life;
And if we miss one life, we shall not find
Its lesson in another; rather, go
So much the less complete for evermore,
Still missing something that we cannot name.
Still with our senses so far unattuned
To what the Present brings to harmonise
With our soul's Past. For must we not believe
A soul, bred up in perfect rule of growth,
And of obedience to the Will Divine
Through all its stages, would be born in each
In physical and spiritual harmony
With that world's order as conceived by God;
(However marred by time, and falling off,
By disobedience, into pain and sin,
Down to the actual order of the day)?

And therefore Christ, conceived and born on earth
So perfect, through foregone obedience,
Came, and abode, and lived harmoniously
With all the occult powers, the holy springs
Unfallen of the waters and the winds,
And the miracles of life within the blood,
That at His voice or touch, still easily
Obeyed, through laws of sense and soul at one;
And lived with God in such untroubled love
And clear confiding, as a child on whom
The Father's face has never yet but smiled;
And with men even, in such harmony
Of brotherhood, that whatsoever spark
Of pure and true in any human heart
Flickered and lived, it burned itself towards Him
In an electric current, through all bonds
Of intervening race and creed and time,
And flamed up to a heat of living faith,
And love, and love's communion, and the joy
And inspiration of self-sacrifice;
And drew together in a central coil,
Magnetic, all the noblest of all hearts,
And made them one with Him, in a live flame
That is the purifying and the warmth
Of all the earth even to these latter days.

But found one kingdom not in harmony;
The sin and sorrow in the world, the stream
Of evil, gathering on from age to age,

With all its rocks and all its wrecks of life ;
And men's hearts hardened, and the tender lips
Of women loud in laughter, and the sobs
Of children helpless, and the sighs of slaves,
And priests with dead lies for the living truth.
And kings whose rights were in their people's wrong.
And looking, the miraculous tender eyes,
Upon these perishing and gone astray,
Lifted the hands of help, alone, unarmed,
Struck singly out, and dashed upon the rocks.
And in that shock did meet His human doom
Of suffering, and took it for a crown ;
The loneliness, the weariness, the strife,
The base return, the Passion and the Cross,
And the withdrawal of His Father's face.
—So that for ever since, in minds of men,
By some true instinct this life has survived
In a religious immemorial light,
Pre-eminent in one thing most of all ;
The Man of Sorrows ;—and the Cross of Christ
Is more to us than all His miracles.

And that most closely we may follow Him
By suffering, have all hearts of men allowed.
Is suffering then more near and dear to God
For its own sake than joy is ? God forbid !
We know not its beginning nor its end ;
Is it a sacrifice ? a test ? a school ?
The fruit of Evil ;—yet what Evil means

None knoweth, though he spent his life to know.
We suffer. Why we suffer,—that is hid
With God's foreknowledge in the clouds of Heaven.
The first book written sends that human cry
Out of the clear Chaldean pasture-lands
Down forty centuries ; and no answer yet
Is found, nor will be found, while yet we live
In limitations of Humanity.
But yet one thought has often stayed by me
In the night-watches, which has brought at least
The patience for the hour, and made the pain
No more a burden which I groaned to leave,
But something precious which I feared to lose
—How shall I show it, but by parables?

The sculptor, with his Psyche's wings half-hewn,
May close his eyes in weariness, and wake
To meet the white cold clay of his ideal
Flushed into beating life, and singing down
The ways of Paradise. The husbandman
May leave the golden fruitage of his groves
Ungarnered, and upon the Tree of Life
Will find a richer harvest waiting him.
The soldier dying thinks upon his bride,
And knows his arms shall never clasp her more,
Until he first the face of his unborn child
Behold in heaven : for each and all of life,
In every phase of action, love, and joy,
There is fulfilment only otherwhere.—

But if, impatient, thou let slip thy cross,
Thou wilt not find it in this world again,
Nor in another ; here, and here alone
Is given thee to *suffer* for God's sake.
In other worlds we shall more perfectly
Serve Him and love Him, praise Him, work for Him,
Grow near and nearer Him with all delight ;
But then we shall not any more be called
To suffer, which is our appointment here.
Canst thou not suffer then one hour,—or two ?
If He should call thee from thy cross to-day,
Saying, It is finished !—that hard cross of thine
From which thou prayest for deliverance,
Thinkest thou not some passion of regret
Would overcome thee ? Thou wouldst say, " So soon ?
Let me go back, and suffer yet awhile
More patiently ;—I have not yet praised God."
And He might answer to thee,—" Never more.
All pain is done with." Whensoe'er it comes,
That summons that we look for, it will seem
Soon, yea too soon. Let us take heed in time
That God may now be glorified in us ;
And while we suffer, let us set our souls
To suffer perfectly : since this alone,
The suffering, which is this world's special grace,
May here be perfected and left behind.

—But in obedience and humility ;—
Waiting on God's hand, not forestalling it.

Seek not to snatch presumptuously the palm
By self-election ; poison not thy wine
With bitter herbs if He has made it sweet ;
Nor rob God's treasuries because the key
Is easy to be turned by mortal hands.
The gifts of birth, death, genius, suffering,
Are all for His hand only to bestow.
Receive thy portion, and be satisfied.
Who crowns himself a king is not the more
Royal ; nor he who mars himself with stripes
The more partaker of the Cross of Christ.

But if Himself He come to thee, and stand
Beside thee, gazing down on thee with eyes
That smile, and suffer ; that will smite thy heart,
With their own pity, to a passionate peace ;
And reach to thee Himself the Holy Cup,
(With all its wreathen stems of passion-flowers
And quivering sparkles of the ruby stars),
Pallid and royal, saying " Drink with Me ;"
Wilt thou refuse? Nay, not for Paradise !
The pale brow will compel thee, the pure hands
Will minister unto thee ; thou shalt take
Of that communion through the solemn depths
Of he dark waters of thine agony,
With heart that praises Him, that yearns to Him
The closer through that hour. Hold fast His hand,
Though the nails pierce thine too ! take only care
Lest one drop of the sacramental wine

Be spilled, of that which ever shall unite
Thee, soul and body to thy living Lord !

Therefore gird up thyself, and come, to stand
Unflinching under the unfaltering hand,
That waits to prove thee to the uttermost.
It were not hard to suffer by His hand,
If thou couldst see His face ;—but in the dark !
That is the one last trial :—be it so.
Christ was forsaken, so must thou be too :
How couldst thou suffer but in seeming, else ?
Thou wilt not see the face nor feel the hand,
Only the cruel crushing of the feet,
When through the bitter night the Lord comes down
To tread the winepress.—Not by sight, but faith,
Endure, endure,—be faithful to the end !

Is it then verily so hard to take
With willing heart, and utter faithfulness ?
What better wouldst thou have when all was done ?
If any now were bidden rise and come
To either, would he pause to choose between
The rose-warm kisses of a waiting bride
In a shut silken chamber —or the thrill
Of the bared limbs, bound fast for martyrdom ?' . . .

But suddenly the words upon his lips
Were broken,—for a strange shock through the air
Came flashing, and a southern-streaming wind

Of violets, and strains of marching hymns,
And throbbing stroke of drums that still came on
Nearer, and tramp of thousands, and the songs
That none of us had ever heard before,
And a great cry out of the heart of Rome.
And all of us grew pale,—and Ugo stood
Pale in the midst; and one rushed in, and cried,
'Italy! Italy! To arms! To arms!
Milan is up! The Austrians are in flight.
The King is at the war. Our time is come.
Who is for God and Italy to-day?'
And all the dark eyes from the pallets round
Strained forward to the speaker; and we all
Gazed on each other; and the setting sun
Burst in one long ray down the walls of fire;.
And the old man, Luigi, who had lain
So long and moved not, raised himself half up,
With eyes that shone; and no one spoke a word,—
But listened;—and the shouting in the street
Grew, and the songs; and all the glorious gold
Of the sunset broadened:—and we knew that we
Had wakened:—and the new time had begun.

IV.

1848.

'ITALIA UNA!' Now the war-cry rang
From Alp to Etna: and her dreams were done,
And she herself had wakened into life,
And stood full armed and free: and all her sons
Knew they were happy to have looked on her,
And felt it beautiful to die for her.
As at the unsheathing of the tulips, rose
Her youth in armies from her soil that spring.
Milan came first, then Venice, then the rest,—
Padua, Treviso, backwards to the Alps;
Osopo, Palmanova; every day
Brought some fresh city to the muster-roll
Of those who cast the Austrian yoke away.
The Princes, too, had joined the Holy War;
Savoy with passion, casting into it
Heart, hopes, and fortune, heritage, and life;
The others, because Italy had called
Her children, and they could not keep them back
So every day fresh bands from all her coasts
Were marching to her borders, and the sound
Of trumpets went before them all the day.

But higher than the note of trumpet swelled
The heart of Italy; and faster beat
The heart of Italy than all the bells
That pealed on one another through the air.
The stone of centuries in a day was rolled
Back from her sepulchre, and such a face,
And such a voice of resurrection, broke
At the unsealing, that her foes fell back
Astonished, and the day was all her own.

Who can recall those days? We lived, we lived!
The dawn was on the mountains, and our brows.
Men wept for joy who had grown grey with care;
And women crowned with beauty gave their lips
Unto their lovers, saying, 'The last time,
Till thou comest back from the baptism of fire!'
And in the Holy Place the Pope stood up,
The Father of his country, and proclaimed,
'Depart, my children, to the Holy War!'
And blessed their banners; and they gathered round,
The flower of all the Roman youth, and knelt
Beneath his benediction; and in sight
Of all the people parted from his hands
Towards Ferrara, in a brotherhood
Of solemn exultation and of faith.
The Cross surmounted the Italian flag;
From highest to lowest there was but one heart
In those bright days, one cloudless hope in God,

One trust in one another uttermost,
One sacrament supreme of life or death.

The stir of the Crusade was in our ears;
The stir of the spring-tide was in our blood;
The hours flew by us as if shining steeds
Were passing, panting, to a crimson dawn.
But all the peace was gone from Ugo's eyes,
And a strange fire was shining in their depths;
And almost ere we knew it, he was gone;
Passed to Ancona,—and the house in Rome
Missed him through all its shadowy passages;
And old Luigi not long after died

But there was too much moving life and noise
Through Rome, for any to sit still and pine,
Dreaming instead of doing. And the Pope
Passed in and out among his people like
The living standard of the Hope of God,
Surrounded by their blessing and their love.
I was of those who helped to raze the walls
Of the Ghetto, in the Holy Week that year;
For so the Pope commanded. And at night,
Ciceruacchio and his hundreds came
From Porto di Ripetta, calling all
Who would, to help; and by the glorious moon
We wrought with axe and tool and willing hands,
Until the jealous walls were broken down,
In token that henceforward all dark feuds

Were passed away, and Italy was one.
But I—as I passed homewards, and the owls
Were hooting from the arches overgrown—
Still heard the voice of Ciceruacchio ring
Commanding, and the sound was pleasant still;
The brave and bright and sympathetic soul
In it, that made of a poor man the power
To which all Rome paid homage gratefully.
The Tribune of the People, who could stay
A tumult by the lifting of his hand;
And by the lifting of his voice could bring
An army round him; and who, having naught
But his own heart and hands, had made of them
A kingdom, having for its own domain
The hearts and hands of all his citizens.

His name was Angelo Brunetti, but
None knew him by that name: for when a babe,
His mother, seeing him so wondrous white
And ruddy, and with limbs that waxed amain,
Half prophesying, in the Roman speech
Had called him *Ciceruacchio*,—'Fair and Strong';
And still the name grew with him as he grew
To stature stateliest, and strongest arm,
And fairest face of all the city. Now
His full prime was fulfilled, and he had won
The crown and blessing of all people's praise,
And trust of men even as he trusted God:
But for himself had won no place or store,

A poor man first and last, and earning bread
By daily labour, having still to spare
The service of a stout hand and warm heart
For whomsoever was in wrong or need.

It was not given me, who was little worth,
To be with Ugo Bassi in those days,
And in the days that followed :—so the tale
Of how it fared with him, and what he did,
Is incomplete for me. I can but give
Such passages as have through many mouths
Come to me ; but they have not life to me
Like what I knew myself. When he had been
A few days at Ancona, thither sent
For preaching, there arrived the gathering stream
Of Volunteers, that still from every town
Flowed larger than it entered, and went on
Increasing,—for it must be borne in mind
That this was not a war of kings with kings,
Or nations disciplined to their full strength,
But of a people, rising for their own,
Unarmed, untrained, unmarshalled, to the shock
Of armies marching as one man in miles ;
And fortresses that frowned across the plains
Against each other ; and the settled strength
And ancient order of the Empire which
Of all the world embodied most the law
Of Force, and Darkness, and Stability.
It was as if a flower should fling itself

Against a pine, and think that it would fall :
Yet faith was in us, faith, which, some one said,
Could move the mountains, and we had no fear.
And those who gave their bodies often had
No more to give ; and those who had the gold
And arms to give, were often held at home ;
So each one paid his part throughout the land,
But all was voluntary, goods or life.

But with the Volunteers, their chaplain came,
Gavazzi, he a Barnabite as well ;
To whom spake Ugo, 'Let me come with you !
And he with joy consented, being one
In heart with him, and always a good friend :
But Ugo was to him, himself hath said,
'Angelo più che amico.' And soon
Was Ugo Bassi formally enrolled
As chaplain of the Roman Volunteers,
Second in order. So together they
Went forward on the march to Rimini ;
And thence proceeded by the Emilian Way
On to Bologna ; whither, drawn in haste,
Twelve thousand of the Volunteers from Rome
Had gathered, waiting for supplies and arms.
Here were the troops equipped and organised,
So far as time permitted ; and meanwhile,
A living voice, a living face of fire,
An inspiration, as of music blown
From clarion-calls far off behind the hills,

Where sank the sunset into light of dreams,
Was Ugo, once more passing in and out
Within his native city,—he too bound
By the red cross, and the tri-coloured sign,
Into the ranks of death for her defence.

And they entreated him: 'Speak once to us,
Where all of us may hear thee. There is room
In none of the great churches for the throng
Of all who love thee; and besides we know,
No friend is the Archbishop.' So they raised
A scaffolding amidst the public square,
Piazza Maggiore, stateliest
Save one, in Italy,—Bologna's pride,
With all its palaces and porticoes
Looking upon the sunny space between,
Where the bronze giant of the fountain stands
Above the flowing of his own white waves.
In front of the innumerable stems
Of the stone forest, where a thousand hands
Of sculptors on the doorways left their life,
Upon the steps of San Petronio, stood
The tribune, and upon it Ugo stood,
The next day after Easter (which that year
Upon the twenty-fourth of April fell):
And there, when he had spoken from his heart
Such solemn words as the hour brought to him
He called on whomsoever would, to bring
Their offerings to the treasury of war.

And all day long the people came and went
Unceasing, and the square was all alive
With voices and bright colours underneath,
And many feet repassing, and full hands :
And in a ceaseless sweeping overhead
Went to and fro the swallows, full of sound,
With twittering, in and out the gilded shrines,
And niches of the arches that support
The watch-tower of the prison of a king,
The windows of the Hall of Hercules,
And all the carven capitals around ;—
They too in armies, building, making joy.

But as upon an altar, rose the pile
Heaped up round Ugo by the Bolognese :
Gold pieces, yea and silver, rich and poor
Alike outpouring, down to the last mite
Of who were poorest ; and the gifts besides
Of household treasure or of handicraft.
Some brought the humble wares of the day's work,
By which they should have earned the daily bread ;
And others priceless heirlooms of delight,
Kept sacred for the state of holidays ;
Venetian crystal, glimmering chains of pearl,
Bosses of emerald on the beaten gold,
And changing stars of diamonds ; carven screens
Of ebony, and silver caskets wrought
With figures of the angels, ivory
Finer than frost-work, lustre-trailing robes,

Rich stuffs of Eastern colours, hoarded lace ;
With arms and horses, casks of meal and wine.
None came with empty hands ; and still the voice
And smile of Ugo answered every one.
Till in a moment's pause, his eyes were fixed,
Where a girl, poor, but lovelier than the rest,
Stept out barefooted from the swarthier throng,
With grey eyes starry under moonlight brows,
And hair too glorious for one flower or pearl
To break its glittering miracle of waves ;
Blood of the ocean or some northern hills
Marking the tenderer blue along her veins ;
She stood so formed, so coloured, from the rest,
A golden lily among marigolds ;
But still her hands were empty and her gown
Was but the blue of Venice, roughly wove.
The eyes of Ugo met her, and the tint
Of the wild rose flew up along her cheek,
And deepened there, and full in front she stood,
Gazing half-sadly,—and then suddenly
Took from her neighbour's belt the hanging shears,
Lifted her white bare arms, and from her head
Sheaf after sheaf let fall the wondrous hair,
Swiftly, till all was gathered, round her neck ;
And sprang towards Ugo, and upon his arm
Laid heavily the cloud-like heaps of gold :
And for a moment all the air seemed still,
While those two fairest faces in the crowd
Were leaning to each other in the light

That flushed from each to each, and then drew back
With a deep breath, parting without a word,—
And she was gone in the press. And ere the red
Had faded from his cheek, another stood
Before him, all the people making way—
A venerable woman, bowed and grey,
And of the poorest, holding by the hand
A youth with shining eyes and growing limbs,
Almost a child—and saying, 'Take my son!
The last one left me.' So the day wore on.

Durando was the General-in-Chief;
Ferrari, General of the Volunteers.
These crossed the Po; and by forced marches came
First through Rovigo, then through Padua; then
Were halted at Treviso, the last post
To hold against the Austrian hosts, that now
Were streaming down the passes of Tyrol.
The line of the Piave was to hold;
(The wide and desolate river which forbids
Venetia to the stranger, sweeping through
Two hundred miles of windings, wild and white,
Without a bridge or city, and which keeps
The music of the mountains to its close;)
Since Nugent was already ravaging,
With fire and sword, Friuli; and the roads
Between the other rivers had been seized.
Treviso is not only by its walls
And forts defended; but upon one side

Made unapproachable by the wide bed,
And muddy banks of Sile ;—therefore here
Was a firm stronghold of retreat for us.
But further up, amongst the mountain-roots,
Half-way from Feltre to Belluno, had
The Austrians found a passage ; and our troops
Were moved to meet them. At Cornuda they
Came face to face, and the first shock of arms
Rang through the valleys. Through the long spring day
The Volunteers against a threefold force
Held their own ground, and when the night came down
Remained the masters ; and another day
Of fierce and bloody conflict broke again,
And still no succour from Durando came,
And still they fought till evening unsubdued.
But when all hope was over, and no aid
Was possible, they fell for shelter back
Upon the green and forest-sprinkled sides
Drifted with heaps of apple-blossom snow
Of Mount Belluno ; and the sun went down
Blood-red behind it, and the awful heights
Above Cadore stood out one by one,
And through the greyer gloom the glimmering white
Came chilly, from the waste of waters spread
In foaming network over many a mile
Of sand and shingle, where Piave swept
Below the green and dewy pasture-slopes,
As Ugo went along with the retreat,
Bearing the wounded up the rocky ways,

From his first battle-field. And the next day
They passed back to Treviso, where they held
The enemy from further pressing on.

Here, in the daily sallies that were made,
Foremost amid the fire, unarmed, unhurt,
Was Ugo Bassi, like a guiding star.
In front of those who wavered, when the hail
Fell sharp upon the young, unseasoned files;
Beside the dying on the battle-field,
Almost before the charge had swept aside;
Lifting the wounded in the thickest press,
And passing with his burdens to and fro
Between the cannon and the ambulance;
Soothing the long hours of the restless night
Within the hospital;—entreated there
With yearning anguish, and let go with pain—
'Angel of Death,' as many a struggling soul
Had sealed him surely with its last low moan.

And with him others worked, and went, and came:—
A friend of his, Felice Orsini,
Younger than he, also a Romagnole,
With dark and glorious eyes, and darker yet,
Men said, because of prisons, and of dreams,
And deathless passion for his native land.
And General Guidotti, he who bore
So much reproaching, and uncalled-for blame
Because of the ill-fortune of the day

He guided at Cornuda, that at last
He said in bitterness, 'Will Italy
Not trust me to command? At least, I can
Obey, and serve her:'—so resigned his post,
And marched out in the ranks. And as it drew
To the mid May-time, all the garrison
Mustered in force for one determined stroke;
And, issuing from the bridges, put to flight
The Austrians in a well-contested day.
But in the hottest of the struggle fell
Guidotti, with a bullet through his breast.
And Ugo in a moment at his side
Was bending, seeking for the pulse in vain;
When with a crash he too beside him lay,
Shattered and senseless; and for many hours
No succour came. And when at last he lay
In his own hospital, they found the ball
Had mutilated hand, and arm, and side,
And torn a passage open through his breast,
And lodged deep in the shoulder out of reach.

In agony and fever many days
He lay, and all around him deemed his wounds
Must needs be mortal; for they still refused
All healing; and the ball could not be found,
Though searched for by the surgeons many times,
With torments carried into deathly swoons,
Yet unavailing; and the hero-heart,
Suffering all things in silent steadfastness,

Began to flicker to the shades of death.
And by the next month it became too clear
Treviso soon would fall into the hands
Of the invaders; and it was resolved,
In order that the wounded might not fall
Also into their hands, to send them first
To Venice. Thus was Ugo carried there,
And painfully the journey was performed.

A dream of dreams was Venice in those days
Heroic; first and last, and silver star,
That rose and set for Freedom while the name
Of Italy was spoken. And of all
Heroic citizens and noble names
That guided and that guarded her, the first,
By the consent and reverence of all,
Was Daniel Manin. He, the head and chief
Of the free city, came forth in her name,
With honourable welcome, to receive
Him whom all hearts were turning to; and stood
Ready upon the Molo, just in front
Of the two granite columns, as the barge
Came down the Giudecca, carrying him;—
Then stept bareheaded to the water's side.
But his face changed to pain when he beheld
The face that could not raise its eyes to him,
And the cold hand that unresponsive lay
Within his clasp. And those who waited there,
Lifted him fainting and without a word,

And bore him to the softest chamber spread
In the still heart of Venice. There he lay,
While gentle hosts beside him tenderly
Watched, and attended on him, seeking ease
And solace for the burning limbs in vain;
And surgeons with their carefullest of skill
Used their stern arts upon him; but the strife
Was threefold—betwixt art, and pain, and death.
But still he smiled and suffered, thanking all,
And saying, 'It is sweet for Italy!'
Until, at one more trial, when at last
The surgeons drew deep breaths, and said, 'No more –
'We cannot!' and he answered them, 'Go on!'
The ball was reached and moved;—and he had sunk
Past consciousness: but those around him said,
'He will be saved if he has strength to live
Through the next day.' But then began afresh
The strife of life with weakness. Shadowy,
Upon the borders of the angel world,
Lay the pale, sculptured face, and wasted form
For many weary weeks; and when at last
The tide of life began to flow again,
Though languidly, yet surely, he was moved
Down to Chioggia, to the hospital,
Where many wounded found their healing come
In the sea-breezes.
Here he stayed awhile,
Hardly recovering, wavering to and fro
In all the painful, fluctuating turns

Of a frame torn and shaken utterly.
Consumed besides by the impatient sense
The war was passing, and he was not there:
And troubled by forebodings as the days
Went by, and fortune now began to flow
The other way; and tidings came of towns
Delivered to the Austrians, battles lost,
And the King's army in retreat. And dark
The clouds began to gather o'er the day
That was so clear and splendid in its dawn.

And faith and unity began to fail:
The Pope first failing from the glorious place
To which his people's hearts had lifted him;
Receding from his word, and calling back
The army that had gone forth in his name.
So that the hearts whose loving reverence still
Entwined itself with patriotic fire,
Were torn asunder, and were forced to break
One sacred bond, remaining at their posts;
And knew henceforward, that not man, but God,
Must be their helper and their guiding hand.
All these things preyed on body and on mind,
And made the tedious time more tedious still.
A letter from Chioggia once was brought
Into our convent, and I heard it read;
It was from Ugo. This was some of it:

'The days go slowly, and the summer air

Gives me no strength. Many a one lieth here
More helpless than myself, but scarcely I
Can make a shift to give a helping hand
For any need. The days are sad and slow :—
But sometimes towards the evening, I can rise
And with uncertain steps pass out of doors,
And breathe the cooler air. I sit and lean
Upon the long low bridge that ends the street
And crosses the lagoon. Down to my feet
The shifting scarlet of the sunset-way
Ripples across the waters of the waste.
Behind me all the foldings of the sails
Of many colours, and the mingled masts,
And briny, tangled heaps of fishing nets
Within the little port, come close and clear
In the still blue flame of the air, full of the salt
Sea-fragrance blowing over from the sides
Of the Murazze. As from tower to tower
The bells chime down along the lighted coast,
Sweet voices answer them, and fisher-girls,
Lovely, with depths of ocean in their eyes,
Make music unto Mary of the Sea.
Far-wavering distances of golden haze
Flooding the blue of the Euganean hills,
The visionary mounts of the soothsayers ;—
Whilst low and clear, one rose from shore to shore,
Lies Palestrina, like a Paradise
Of lovers lost, who in this hour at last
Have found each other ; and the skies and seas,

And earth itself, are panting in the glow
Of crimson ; and the summer night is theirs.
And up between, "like rubies loosely strewn
Upon a silver mirror," fade away
To northward the innumerable isles,
And towers, and little towns of the lagoon,
In a far-shadowed purple vanishing.
Yea, glorious is the last smile of the day,
And the unutterable afterglow,
Here, looking towards the sunset ; and the war
Lies out beyond it, and the restless heart
Beats thither, and the trumpets seem to blow
Far off, far off, behind the dying hills !

'But yet I turn, and to the other sky,
Pale, grey, without the mountains and the glow
Some hidden power compels me. I can see
Flamingo-coloured flashes through the gloom
Go southwards, and the white and wheeling wings
Of sea-birds passing to the darkened shore ;
And I would fain be following them, and learn
The mystery that lies for me in that land
Untrodden ; where Eridanus flows out
In sluggish labyrinths through the solitudes,
Which but the brooding herons amid the pines
Live in, and wander through, and find a home.
Who knoweth all the winding ways of waters
In slow and many folds about thy feet,
O country that none loveth ? Who hath crossed

The forests of the reeds impenetrable?
The willow-courses, where the flute-like notes
Of ousel, and the darting kingfisher
Make all the life? The undistinguished web
Of river-branches, slowly drifting down
The desolation of the choking sand
Seawards, until they reach the trackless waste,
The wilderness of waters in their ways,
Where shore, and sea, and river lose themselves?

'I ask them here, "What lieth to the South?"
They answer, "Nothing." And I ask again,
"What men dwell there?" they answer me, "Not one.'
"Where goes the road then?" and they answer me,
"But to Ravenna, three days' journey off.
But ere you reach it, you must make across
The great pine-forest and the myriad mouths
Of Po, and the vast shallows of the plain,
With causeways stretching over the lagoon,
Not land, not water, where the great eels lie,
The Valley of Comacchio." Aye, the name
Haunts me! I rise out of my bed at night,
And wish that I could wander there. My limbs
Are weak. The moonlight muffles in a mist
The land low-lying; from it comes a wail.
I know not why, my heart is bowed with it,
Foreboding, like a bulrush with the wind.
Is it the Song of the Swans, that ever there
Go mourning since the fall of Phaethon?

Some deathnote peals across the water-wold,
Pierced with the echoes of some shadowy doom;
Some parting anguish of a soul in flight,
Some melancholy mystery of fate.

'I pass, I pass in dreaming out upon
A wide waste plain, where rushes grow beside
The trickling threads that lose themselves in pools
Beneath old stones, all thick and dark with moss;
Some little wild thing startled, springs and runs
Before me, lost in swift and shadowy flight:
And great grey moths with downy circling wings
Lead me enchanted through uncertain ways,
Where the marigold of the marsh is growing pale,
On to the borders of a shimmering mere:
As when a faded sunset shines below
In silent waters, with the dark between
Of land and hills, the light below, above,
In sky and water,—but the earth is dusk,—
And all now gathers and grows dusk with it.
And hardly now my feet know where they tread
In moss, or swamp, or pool; and here and there
A glow-worm sparkles tremulously green;
And a great rustling in the water-flags,
And thousands of shrill notes and dreary calls,
And plashings, and soft stirrings of the sedge,
Tell of the wild flocks that are nesting there.
Was that a spirit went by me, all in wings
That made the shadows glorious? Now again

It brushed my face, and in a streak was gone,—
The giant of the dragon-flies abroad.

'Great, hollow, hemlock-canes above my head
Stretch out their straight, stiff arms; and all around
The ceaseless croak comes up about my feet,
And out into the dark and damp;—beware!
Black, shining, twining stems of poison-flowers,
Blue blossoms beautiful, and deadly white,
Catch at me with their rings; the osiers smite
And blind me, and I cannot make a way.
I stand and hear a swift and flowing sound
Of waters close beside me, and I strike
Away from them; and on the other side
I come upon more waters, gurgling slow;
Waters upon the right hand and the left;
There is no footing, so I stumble on,
Ankle-deep in the soft and slimy moss,
Until I find an opening. Here is light
In ghostly, fitful glimmers, as the coils
Of water-snakes shine out in writhing knots,
Or cleave the black, slow current, with a wake
Of pale blue fire. The gliding Will-o'-the-wisp
Hither and thither seems to float and fade
Over black trunks that rot amid the stream,
And lurid luminous vapour hangs outspread
Hovering above the ooze; and I can see
The long grey mosses swinging from the arms
Of the old larches; and all things seem here

Decaying in a stagnant solitude.

'The darkness shuts me in again, and I
Go blindly, brushing past the rigid arms
Of hideous giant horsetails, and my feet
Tread out the burning milk-juice of the spurge,
Until at last they find a firmer bed;
And over them the horrible land-crabs
Run swiftly, and slow-moving reptiles crawl
Dimly beneath me. Now I feel the sand,
And now the slippery hollows, as I pass
Through the bewildering cane-brakes, till I gain
The light once more. Lo, from behind the clouds
The moon comes suddenly, and all the night
Shines out in silver; and I come at last
To a clear water's edge, a broad still stream,
With one calm, onward ripple, breaking here
Before me in the moonlight on the sands,
The smooth white sands that make a level shore.
Behind and over me the feathery reeds
Make darkness;—but before me all is light;
The beautiful, broad water, winding on
To where dark woods dip into it, and close;
And out in the full wanness of the moon
The armies of the sedges in their ranks,
The shiver of their swords innumerable;
And not a sound besides, and not a breath,
Nor any footprint on the sands save mine.
Yet here is something strange, that will not let

My eyes be loosened from it :—scarce a mark
In the fine sand—and yet I cannot fly
This midnight vision of a new-made grave
That stops me ;—there it lies unconsecrate.
Now know I, I have reached my house of doom,
No hope nor saving any more for me.—
—What foolish visions of the night are these ? '

But though the cruel wound began to heal,
Still Ugo languished ; and his wonted strength
Returned not to him ; and he, suffering, craved
The native air and old familiar streets
Of his Bologna ; and with care and pain
Thither he was removed at his desire,
And lodged among his friends ; and slowly there
He mended, and the life came back to him.

But great good fortune now to me befell :
For our good Prior, having much at heart
To see Fra Ugo, and to speak with him,
And having also business to transact
Within Bologna, journeyed thence from Rome,
And took me with him ;—so it came to pass
That I beheld my master's face once more.

It was in August. I for the first time
Beheld Bologna ; and I was amazed
To see so great a city, and the lines
Of the long porticoes, that from the gates

So far stretched upwards. As we passed beneath
The leaning towers, I saw the ravens wheel
About them, croaking, but I heeded not,
My heart was full of the great joy so near.
And when at last we stopped before a door
Among the arcades, and up a stair had climbed
My heart stood still before another door
That opened to us, and we stepped inside
A shaded room;—and, waiting for our steps,
From a low couch, once more, at last, at last,
The eyes of Ugo Bassi smiled at me,
Out of the white and wasted face, that still
Was the most beautiful that God had made.

There was much stir and tumult at this time
Within Bologna; for not long before,
The Austrians under Welden had come down
On her, defenceless; but the people rose
In force and fury unforeseen; and drove
Them out, and armed themselves; and thenceforth held
And fortified their city; and stood firm
In their municipal and ancient rights,
Desiring to be ruled no more by priests.
But the Pope's Legate sought by force of arms
To repossess himself, and blood was shed;
And all things were unquiet and disturbed;
And all the citizens were under arms
Against the Papal troops and the Swiss guard.

Felice Orsini was also there,

With other of the Roman volunteers
Disbanded from Treviso, by the terms
Of the capitulation, under bond
To fight no more in Lombardy that year.
He, having won the rank of Captain, held
A leader's place among the boldest there ;
And kept a firm hand on the populace,
Prone to excesses after long restraint.

And, loving much my master, Orsini
Came oft to his sick chamber ; and one day,
I, waiting there upon him, heard them both
Conversing a short time in earnest tones ;
But Ugo's voice failed soon, and he lay there,
Silent, and sad, until his friend exclaimed,
'Dost thou see aught, that thou regardest me
So gravely? What is it displeases thee?'
And Ugo answered, in a voice that came
Slowly, and as it were without himself: —
'The shadow of a great doom within thine eyes.'

'A doom! What doom?' Orsini answered him :—
'We are all in the same doom. Have we not sworn
To know no rest till Italy be one,
And rescued from the stranger? Did we think
The day of our discharge would find us whole,
And young, and ready for this life's reward?
Does the red stand for rose-leaves on our flag?
We have learnt better, thou and I at least.
I have spent years in prison, when no hope

Seemed possible ; and knew my brethren then
Were striving for me, and that prayers like thine
Were rising for me—and now I am here :
But bound in the same service,—and I know
Its uttermost guerdon is the darkest death,
And that the very face of Italy
Shall not smile yet on those that die for her,
And to that doom go forward undismayed.
But whether thou, or I, or this one here,
Or any other, shall be called the first,
Or what shall be the calling, who can know?

And Ugo answered, still as in a dream :
'Yea, through the Shadow of an Agony
Cometh Redemption—if we may but pass
In the same footprints where our Master went,
With Him beside us ;—and for me, I fear
No evil, since He has not failed me yet,
Nor will, for ever ;—and I know He will
Be with me when I go to meet my hour ;
—But thou, thou goest all alone to thine.'

'Let me be lost, so Italy be saved !
Orsini answered ; and went out from us.
But the next day I sat beside the bed
Where Ugo was asleep ; and watched the flies
Should not disturb him, for the heat was great ;
And marked the helpful hand relaxed and white,
Laid on the coverlet ; and anxiously

Listened for the low breathing which assured
He rested :—for now, languid after long
Fever, and pain, and weariness, he slept
Hour after hour, and ever craved for more ;
And when awake was weary ; and when left
In quiet, quickly was asleep again.

There was loud tumult in the town below ;
But coming through the sultry air, the noise
Was not so harsh or near as to do hurt.
But through the quiet house now quick steps came
Ascending, and the door was pushed aside
Hastily, and with jar, and Ugo woke ;
And gazed upon Felice Orsini,
Who had burst in, with eyes and cheeks aglow
And full of laughter, saying : 'Pardon me !
But business is important, and admits
Of no delay. I bring a message from
A humble suppliant—if he were but here !
The Cardinal-Archbishop—I am told
There is no love lost between you and him,
And that there is good cause for it, and you
Have a long score against him. Now your time
Is come ; he lies imploring at your feet.
Will you forgive him ?' Ugo smiled and said,
'Forgive him *now ?* Nay, I forgave him then.
That was eight years ago : but now, at last,
What does he want of me ?' Orsini said :
'The mob are up against him ; and indeed

They are not to be trifled with. He seems
Far from beloved, if one may judge by what
One hears and sees. Already they have forced
The doorways, and have filled the inner court,
And all the square is full of half-armed men,
Clamouring and crying that he should come forth,
And answer for his office to the Court
Of Public Safety. But he dares not stir
Nor show himself. He sent to speak with me,
Entreating me to save him, and to get
An escort that he might escape to Rome.
But underneath the windows one could hear
The people yelling like hyænas, "Who
Imprisoned Ugo Bassi?" and again,
"Remember Ugo Bassi!" and myself
Would rather stand before the Austrian guns
For half a day, than stand for half an hour
Before the fury of our Bolognese.
I would not have him hurt; but for your sake,
Was glad to have him frightened: so I said,
As grave and stern as I could well appear:
"To Rome?—You hear the people name my friend;
He is close by, as you are well aware.
I think there are accounts between you two
That might be settled better here than there.
I must consult him." But he begged and prayed:
—He had been forced,—he had done nothing more
Than his most painful duty,—and had borne
Grievous suspicion, merely through his zeal

In interceding for you ;—for himself,
He always had admired you from his heart ;
You could not have a truer friend than him.
His gushing love and his benevolence
For everybody was so great, in short,
He could not comprehend how they could show
Such strange ingratitude—but thought it was
A dispensation of mysterious grace.
But now, would you, and I, and his good friends
Get him away ? I need not stay to count
The pastoral and apostolic showers
Of benediction that should fall on us.
But I can do it—I can hold the mob
In check, and I can use the civic guard ;
Masina too and Zambeccari stand
By me, and we have all the Volunteers.
He will be safe, but we must lose no time.
But now, what message shall I take from you ?'

But Ugo on his couch had raised himself,
With his eyes burning, and his feverish lips ;
And his voice trembled in its eagerness,
As he spoke : ' Friend, by all thou holdest dear,
If thou hast ever loved me, show it now !
O keep him safe and sacred ! Promise me
This day to hold his life before thine own :
I do not say, lest one of his grey hairs
Be harmed,—I trust thee,—but lest one rude word
Come near him, one rough hand should hurry him.

If he should suffer now the smallest thing,
And for my sake, what then could comfort me?
He hath been, ever since I was a boy,
The Primate of this city, and revered
For blamelessness and dignity of life.
Besides I do believe that in his way
He loves our Lord, and thinks that verily
He did Him service in withstanding me.
And if the people think of me, do thou
Tell them from me, that if they would not tear
Open my wounds afresh, and my heart too,
They will part from him in respect and peace.

And Orsini departed: but the time
Seemed long; for Ugo breathed in fever-haste,
And perilously glowed the sunken cheeks,
And all the pulses rushed on one wild way:
While the confused and brawling voices came,
Now rising, and now falling, to our ears.

At last Orsini's step was heard again
Approaching, and he came up to the side
Of Ugo, who had stretched his hands to him,
And said, 'He is in safety. Be at ease.
He had no trouble after I went back.
The people listened to the words I spoke
In your name to them: and I had good show
Of force besides. He has an ample guard
From here to Rome: and no one said a word

Of insult to him after he came out.
I rode beside him to the Roman gate,
And there dismounted, bidding him farewell.
But no one can describe his gratitude,
And his affection both to you and me.
The messages he charged me with to you!—
How his paternal heart had ever yearned
To you his best-beloved son, far more
Than he had been permitted to express—
How no one understood your worth like he—
He seemed in fact to have but one regret
Leaving Bologna,—that was, leaving you.

'At least remember that, whatever comes,
Monsignor Oppizzoni is henceforth
Your most devoted slave. You cannot ask
More of him than he will delight to give:
He longs for opportunity to prove
How true and steadfast can his friendship be;
And his unutterable gratitude
Shall spend itself meanwhile in prayers for you.
And if, at any time, (which Heaven forbid!)
Evil should threaten you, or danger press,
Or any undeserved reproach be yours,
Then count on him and all he has to use
In your defence, and always be assured
He could not have a greater privilege
Than serving you. Pray keep him in your mind.
He still repeats, your piety and mine

Have saved his life this morning. Poor old man,
One would not think that he had much to lose
At his age! It seems really strange to me
That saints should be so loth to lose their lives,
And not more eager for the Paradise
They say is specially reserved for them.
He is a venerable man no doubt:
His predecessors were less discomposed
As they looked up, and round, and finally
Settled their eyes upon the grated doors
That held the lions, opening; nor let stir
An eyelash as the bounds came o'er the sand,
And round and round from earth to sky, the roar
Of the Coliseum.—So at least they say.
Bishops, I think, were different in those days;
Our nerves, perhaps, are weaker. Anyhow,
He is safe off, and no one seems the worse
For losing him, nor inconsolable
At his departure. Are you satisfied?'

Soon after this I was obliged to leave
Bologna and my master; and the next
I heard of him was that his wound was whole,
And he again had started for the war,
Which now had died away in every part
Save Venice: for an armistice was signed
Between Savoy and Austria; and the Pope,
And all the other Princes, had recalled
Their soldiers; (only, up amongst the Alps,

Forsaken, Garibaldi made a stand
With his five hundred). But one city stayed,
Queen of herself, a new republic, bound
Not unto any court conveniences,
But only unto Liberty and Death ;
And Venice now against her bore alone
The whole revengeful pressure of the arms
Of Austria ; only God and her green seas
Helping her ; yet she held, and did not fail,
The torch aloft, and looked not on despair.

Ay, when the bells swing up in the Great Tower,
Slow, slow, to battle, you may feel the air
Begin to tremble, and it is as though
Her golden hair streamed out upon the wind,
And the white arms are lifted high in air,
And the deep eyes are set against the storm,
And the white breast begins to heave and glow,
And all the waters in the ways below
Move with her moving, and become alive.
She was awake then, all the rest were dead.
There were no treasures left in any house,
For every citizen had brought his store
Already to the Public Treasury,
And all was melted down and used ere now.
But her heroic hearts and hands were still
Her own, to die when she died. And she stood,
Girt to the battle with her golden robes,
And with the jewelled breastwork for her shield,

And the soft flowing waters for her walls,
Against the cannon and the frowning forts
And leagues of the blockade, and hordes of Huns.

Thither departed Ugo with his friend
Felice Orsini, and others, left
Out of the Roman legion. At their head
Was Colonel Zambeccari. They embarked,
Twelve hundred, at Ravenna, in such boats
As they could find in harbour, and arrived
At Venice after stormy days of sea,
And many perils from the Austrian fleet;
And being landed, they were sent to guard
The outposts at the fort of Malghera.

Weeks passed: a silent enemy in front,
The desolate breadth of the Lagune behind,
Swift rushing of the Brenta on one hand,
A stagnant channel on the other hand,
Waters divided by the jutting fort,
The marshes and the cane-fields all around,
The mud embankments, the embrasured walls,
The white mist rising round them every night,
The pestilential air enfolding them,
The autumn fever in the midst of them,
Half of the garrison in hospital:—
And Ugo Bassi, pale and suffering still,
Moved, like a shadow of himself, among
The stricken soldiers, falling every day

Before the deadly arrows of this foe
Invisible, yet did not fall himself.

Seven miles of the canal and marsh between
Mestre and Malghera ; and Mestre stood,
The outpost of the Austrians, fortified
Anew, and armed with fresh artillery,
And garrisoned by chosen regiments ;
The key of their position, and the gate
Of the mainland. This was to be attacked.

At ten o'clock one night the drawbridge fell,
And all the garrison from every side
Were mustered in the central fortress. There
The orders were delivered, and all night
Was spent in preparations. Orsini
Was head of the first column on the right,
And next to him, Fontana. Ugo marched
Beside the same battalion, without arms.
At nine o'clock they issued from the gates
Of Malghera, and took the road that runs
Alongside the canal. It was the dull
End of October, and a heavy fog
Had settled over everything, and hid
All the dim plain, and muffled every sound.

Silently, under cover of the mist,
The companies of the attack crept on
Until they had surrounded all the forts :

And halted in their order, still unseen,
Till the command should reach them to advance.
Long time they waited, wet and chilled and stiff,
Crouched in the ditches and behind the walls,
Concealed among the cane-brakes without food,
Till evening, and no word or leader came.
At last, at six o'clock, there was one burst,
All round, of firing, and the hour had come.
On ! straight at the forts ! and over open ground,
Under the cannonade from all the walls,
Advanced the line at once to the assault.
Knee-deep in water, through the flooded field
They struggled to the fosse of the Lunette ;
But their wet arms could not return the fire,
And still the Austrians mowed them down with grape.
Then with one shout, ' Viva l'Italia !'
Felice Orsini sprang, sword in hand,
Straight to the walls, and all his company
Rushed after him, and threw themselves upon
The steep entrenchments in one desperate close.
Half of them fell beneath the last discharge
Of the defenders as they turned and fled
Before the furious onset, and the rest
Passed inwards. But among the wounded lay
Fontana, with his right arm carried off,
As it seemed, dying. Ugo stayed by him.

But, hand to hand, from house to house the fight
Raged on, and everywhere, from point to point,

Back were the Austrians beaten, but gave way
Slowly, in deadly struggle ; and the night
Darkened above the crowded combatants,
And the broad moon appeared, and flames burst out
In conflagration from deserted holds,
Till all the place was lighter than by day.
But many of the Austrians had been made
Prisoners, and many slain ; and of our own
Many were slain or wounded ; and at last,
Past midnight, but a remnant on each side
Held on through the last conflict, in a wild
Crash and uproar of blood, and flame, and cries,
Madness and rage of slaughter and despair,
Round the last stronghold which the Croats kept,—
The Villa Bianchini, pouring sheets
Of flaming hail from all the windows, barred,
And with spiked walls impregnable all round.
Under the murderous fire Orsini led
His columns driven back and back again ;
Some scaled the walls, some wavered, some were hurled
Headlong upon the others,—all their fate
Hung on the shock and strain of this last hour.
The flag of Italy upon the ground
Sank, with the standard-bearer ; savage cries
Rang with the volleys from the heights of stone.
Then they saw Ugo in the midst of them,
A flash, a vision, with illumined eyes,
And in his hand the flag—and he was past,
Above them high upon the perilous walls,

Unarmed amidst the steel, and fire, and storm,
And first within the palace, all alone
Amidst the Croats, who beheld amazed,
Suddenly there against the flaring sky,
The terrible bright face of the gold-haired monk,
With the streaming banner and the lifted hand,
And the red cross upon his breast; and some,
Bewildered with the long and furious night,
Shrank back, and said awe-stricken as he passed,
'St. Theodore for Venice!' But he cried,
'Surrender, and I spare you! Pile your arms,
And go before me!' and like sheep they went,
Driven before him down the stairs; and he
Passed to the lower story, and the shots
Ceased, and the disarmed Croats on their knees
Cried 'Quarter!' But he said, 'Unbar the doors;
And they obeyed him. At the bayonets' point
Orsini, with his soldiery, pressed on,
Who, too infuriate to stay or spare,
Sprang on their prey, and massacre began.
But Ugo in the doorway fronted them:
'They are my prisoners, and their lives are mine!'
And Orsini struck back with sword and shout,
The foremost of the maddened, entering throng;
While piercing rose, and terrible, the cries
For mercy, and for vengeance, drowning those.
But in the shattered doorway Ugo stood
Before the Croats, and his fiery eyes
Flashed on the bayonets, and he snatched and held

The crucifix to meet them, and his cry
Rang over theirs : 'Stand back ! You shall not pass
But over my dead body and stretched arms,
And trampled cross of Christ !' And they fell back,
With all the force and fury out of them ;
And the two hundred prisoners were secured,
And all was over, and the place was won.

Six cannon, all the military stores,
And all the papers of the Austrian staff,
Seven hundred prisoners, and all the forts
Of Mestre, fell into our hands that day.
But there were heavy losses ; and among
The chief who perished was Poerio,—
The younger, Alessandro, who, a boy,
Took arms for freedom thirty years ago,
And out of exile sent the songs that stirred
His country's heart, and now received his crown ;
After five days of agony, he breathed
His last in Ugo's arms, at peace in Christ,
And with his mother's name upon his lips.

That was almost the last of the campaign.
Soon afterwards the Roman legion came
Back to Ravenna ; and as they passed through,
They halted for a day or two, and there,
As Ugo knelt and kissed the sacred stone
That covers Dante's grave, the multitude
Followed his steps, and would not let him go

Till he had spoken to them. Those who heard,
Said that his words sank down into their hearts
As never words before,—so grave and strong,—
As he laid charge upon them never more
To trust in priests or princes, who had failed,
But to trust God and their own hearts alone;
And now to keep back nothing of their lives
From God and from their country. Then he came
On to Bologna, and soon afterwards
To Rome again.
Ah, there was joy with us
When Ugo Bassi had come back to take
His lodging with the brotherhood once more!
But as it were his ghost at first he seemed,
So worn and pallid from his toils and pain;
Yet as the days went on, and the new year
Drew into light, his strength returned to him,
And the old looks returned to greet our eyes,
More beautiful than ever, and new hope
And life were stirring in our hearts again.

Rome:—there was such strange tumult in her midst,
Of reawakening spirits, that it seemed
As if the Dead from all the Catacombs
Had risen to live and die again for her.
The Pope had fled, and left no power behind;
And rumours came that both from North and South
The armies of the Stranger were in march
Against the Holy City for his sake.

But she was free, and held her own awhile ;
And there were bonfires in the streets, and shouts,
And hymns of liberty, and chime of bells,
And marshalling of troops for the defence.
Nor did I understand all things that passed :
But this I felt, that day by day, my life
Quickened and deepened, and with broader flow
Swept to the ocean ; and I had become,
Not only human, from unconsciousness,
Not only Christian, from the Pagan lore,
But Roman also, and a citizen
Of no mean city,—but of the world's heart.
And this was borne upon me by sweet winds,
That blew, or so it seemed, and cleared the air
About us, as for some great sacrifice,—
That Rome was now to live again once more,
And not for Italy alone, but for
Humanity, and that we too were bound,
Without escape, to live and die for her.
I cannot tell how these things came to me.—
About this time I once heard Ugo read
A letter which, he said, was for us all ;
He named a name which then I did not know

It said : 'I listen for a voice from Rome,
Some sound as of the reawakening stir
Of a whole people to their former height :—
I do not hear one worthy of her yet.
O Romans, had you but the *will*, the power

Is yours, this day, to mould the world anew!
You hold within your hands the destiny
Of Italy, and, soon or late, must that
Become the world's. It has been ever so.
Do you not know the spell of potency
In those four letters that make up the name
Of Rome—of Amor? Know you not that that
Which uttered otherwhere is but a word,
If uttered once by Rome becomes a *fact*,
Henceforth her own Imperial Decree,
Urbi et orbi. I, the worshipper
Of Rome, have watched and waited for this day,
Knowing that unto her alone belonged
The Mission, that the Word could only come
From the Eternal City. Grant it, God,
That now at last the times may be fulfilled!

'Has ever Providence so plainly said
To any nation: *You shall have no god*
But God; you shall have no interpreter
Of His law but the People? Have you not
Beheld this war, already three parts won,
Lost when you gave its guidance to a King?
The Pope, a voluntary fugitive,
Has left you. Without violence or design
The way has been made plain before your feet.
You have no longer any Government,
Nor any power legitimately owned.
Rome is to-day by the sole grace of Heaven

A free Republic:—and this day is yours,
Once, and once only, for a choice, to take
Your glorious destiny upon yourselves;
And gather to the heart of Italy
In unity her delegates elect,
To utter forth the word to all the world
Which God shall through the People then declare,
And henceforth live—or die—accordingly.'

This winter was the mildest that had been
Within the memory of man at Rome;
The skies were soft and sunny every day,
And the red roses bloomed the winter through.
And ere the spring had well set in this year,
Another Rose had blossomed on the earth,
Another crimson in the morning sky,
And the Republic was proclaimed in Rome.
And late one night, in the first days of March,
When beds of violets scented all the air,
And marigolds were in the springing grass,
Came Ugo Bassi home;—and as he passed
Spake but these words, with radiant, awe-struck face
That lighted all before him, 'I have seen
Mazzini!'—but I knew not whom he meant.

V.

1849.

('Nay ! not from you to me, from me to you,
Romans, this homage of our love should pass.
For all the good that I have sought to do
—Not done—from Rome came to me. Rome has been
Ever for me a talisman. In youth
I found this record written, that whereas
In every other country nations grew,
And spoke their passage in the world's great song,
Then fell, to rise no more in pristine strength,
One only city was endowed by God
With power to die and then to rise again
More glorious than before, and to fulfil
A mission nobler than fulfilled before.
I saw this Rome arise, Imperial,
With empire from the rising of the sun
To his unfollowed setting in the sea
Beyond the Gates of Hercules,—her laws
Written in landmarks still through every land.
And this Rome I saw perish, overwhelmed
By floods of the barbarians. From her tomb
I saw her rise again, this time more great,

In virtue of a victory, not by arms,
But by the Word of God; and in His name
Claiming and wielding sovereignty of souls.
I to my heart said--There is yet to come
More: for a city which, of all the world,
Alone has seen two splendours rise and fall,—
The last the first transcending,—yet must see
A third. All things must follow to their fate.
Following the Rome which wrought by force of arms,
Following the Rome which wrought by force of words,
Must come, so was it shown me long ago,
The Rome which yet shall work by force of life.
Rome of the Cæsars, passed away so long;
Rome of the Popes, passed but a little while;
Rome of the People rises from you both.—
And now the Rome of the People has arisen.
Here, in this Rome, I greet you;—and this hour
Has room in it for no less sacred word.

'Nothing have I to give you of my own,
Nothing have I to promise of myself,
Except that I am with you, one of you,
Whatever work you now may have to do
For Rome, for Italy, and for the weal
Of humankind in Italy. We shall
Perhaps have more than one sharp step to cross,
More than one solemn sacrifice to make,
More than one battle with our gathering foes:
But with the aid of God we will go on

To victory. I trust that nevermore,
So grant it, God, the stranger's scorn may say,
This light from Italy, this blaze from Rome,
Is but a Will-o'-the-wisp among the tombs.
Not so, the world shall hail it as a star,
To set no more, pure, everlasting, bright,
As those which glow in our Italian sky.'

These words were spoken on the Sixth of March ;—
The first time that Mazzini stood within
The Capitol, and knew his time was come.)

But before long, I too had learned to know
Mazzini,—now a citizen of Rome,
And First of the Triumvirate ; by voice
Of the Assembly and the People given
The post of honour and of danger, kept
By Rome for heroes in her hours of fate.
And next to him, two men were worthy found
Of the same touch of fiery laurel-leaf ;
Aurelio Saffi,—Armellini ;—these
Moved with one mind, and Rome was glad of them.

For he was here at last,—the man whose dreams
Had seen her in his youth, a queen as now,
While other eyes had seen but her decay.
He who had prophesied of this young Rome,
Who amid scorn and peril had consumed
His days and nights for her, had worked, and watched

And suffered for her till the hour was come,
And she was born again, a splendour strange,
Out of the travail of his soul,—a dream
Now in the world's full daylight come to pass.
And she, immortal, as it seemed new-born,
Bathed in the golden sunshine of the spring,
Looked lovely as a bride may look, who knows
Her lover's eyes are on her ; and rejoiced.
And I too sometimes, passing in the streets,
Beheld himself ; it was a face which now
I cannot write of,—but I see it still.
The glorious, fiery eyes, the living light
That made the world like one grand smile of God.—
On all sides there was arming those first days
Of the Republic, to resist the hosts
Of Austria, but we felt no fear of them,
For everywhere, along the streets and walls,
Might we behold large letters : 'In the Name
Of God and of the People !' and then came
The order of the day, and it was signed
'Joseph Mazzini, Citizen of Rome.'
The name, the eyes, the voice, were in our midst
All day ; the living hand was holding ours ;
We felt that God was with us. For myself,
I could not understand the words of him
Who spoke as if His Prophet ;—but I saw
How Ugo Bassi, with dilated eyes,
Drank them in day by day, and each day grew
More glorified to look on, as if now

No spiritual need were unfulfilled.
My Master had been great to me till now,
But now a greater One than he appeared,—
His Master, and the Master of us all.
To live through but one perfect hour of life,
With hope enlarging all the space beyond,
Is better than a life-time, and more long,
Looking back on it: thus it seems to me
That time was long, because it was so fair.

But none loved Ugo as Mazzini loved;
Who one day sent for him, and said to him,
'I have a gift to give thee, which thy heart
Shall some day thank me for; I have not found
Another worthy of it; I appoint
Thee to the post of peril, as the priest
Of Garibaldi's legion. Go to him,
And take this letter under hand of mine.
And when thy crowning cometh, think of him,
Thy friend who loves thee and who parts from thee

And Ugo took the letter, and obeyed;
Half grieved to leave the golden hours of Rome,
Half glad for stirrings of new destinies,
Half conscious of a solemn seal of fate.
For no one yet in Rome had ever seen
The face of Garibaldi; but strange tales
Were told of him, and of the fearless few
Who from America had followed him;

Of their rough fashions, and their wild attire,
And the mysterious fortunes of their Chief,
Who in remote and unknown lands had grown
To some strange power and leadership of men,
And now had risen up at his country's call,
For her Deliverer in her hour of need,
With his own army and no law but his;
And by a perilous and hard-won way
Was now advancing on the road to Rome,
And halting at Rieti. Thither came
Ugo, as the Republic's messenger.

The rushing green Velino serpentine
Enrings the towers foursquare, and the red roofs
Crowded and piled within the ancient walls
Of the Sabine City; and the green plain round
Lies one great garden of the vine in spring;
And, twelve miles off, an amphitheatre
Encircles it, of mountains, tender-toned,
Like harmonies of music turned to shape.
And it was morning, when before the tent
Of Garibaldi, Ugo Bassi stood;
And the unknown commander from the door
Advanced to meet him, drest, as was his wont,
In the white mantle and the scarlet vest,
Bare-headed, with the lion-flowing locks;
And greeted him with grave face and few words.

But Ugo looked at him, and speechless stood,

As in a vision; and his breath came short;
And shadowy changes swept across his face,
While still he gazed;—and all at once he spoke:
'I have seen thee, I have seen thee! In the cell
Above the rushing of Potenza, when
I had no hope, and even God seemed gone;—
In mortal sickness, when the agony
Let go, and left me sinking back to life;—
In the long vigils, as it grew towards dawn
Through the grey aisles of the Basilica;—
In flickering nights of fever, when my wounds
Burned, and the hospital was full of groans;—
In the last thunder of the guns, when all
The air was dim and sulphurous with smoke,
And I was lying on a field well-won;—
By deathbeds, when the pain had left the limbs;—
Yea, in the fainting close of the Passion-Week;—
I was aware of one who came and went,
But never stayed by me so long, that I
Might catch the form;—but sometimes in my dreams
I saw it and I knew it:—it was thine.
I could not hold the dream back as I woke;
I was seeking, and I knew not what I sought:
But now I am waking, and I see thy face!'

And over Garibaldi's eyes there came
A soft deep darkness, and he stretched his hand
To Ugo, and the two stood face to face,
The silence thrilling round them like a march

Of music at a hero's funeral,
Until the voice of Garibaldi spoke :—
'We two can be no more parted, save by death.'

And from that hour was Ugo Bassi's place
At Garibaldi's side ; and never more
Did any day divide them ; and it seemed
As if the day long were too short to ease
The lifelong burden of their hearts, till now
Unknown unto each other, and apart.
And Garibaldi said, 'It likes me ill
To see a white dove in a raven's nest :
Or thy bright face above the monkeries
Of the black habit of the Barnabites.
Is it so dear to thee?' And Ugo said,
'Nowise ;—since I have suffered at the hands
Of priests too many things to love their dress
But I abide as it was laid on me.'
And Garibaldi said, 'I lay on thee
Another rule, another uniform ;
Wilt thou receive it?' And he said, 'With joy,
Whatever shall thy hand require of me,
Whatever shall thy hand impose on me,
Shall be to me a law, as at the hand
Of God and of my country, sweet, if stern.'
And Garibaldi said, 'I have not much
Of worldly goods ; but I have some to spare,
Since I have shirts of scarlet two, not one ;
Both are the worse for wear, but they will hold ;

Thou shalt have one, and wear it for my sake,
Who wore it first; and thou shalt leave the black
Garb of the priesthood which I most abhor,
And all my soldiers hate the sight of it,
And will more gladly hear thee, if thou come
In their own colours in the midst of them.'
And Ugo Bassi answered, 'Yea, so far
My heart goes with thee; and from thee to me
Such gift were glory of investiture:
But yet I cannot carry arms of death,
Whose mission is for saving help alone
In need; nor can I leave the crucifix,
The only weapon which hath heretofore
Gone with me through all storms of blood and fire,
And which must be my armour to the last.'
And Garibaldi, musing, answered, 'Mine
Is a bright colour for a battle-mark,
And a gay show upon the open hills,
Or in the streets of cities; but the fire
Of life burns in it to intenser flame.
It is not for the splendid sun alone,
Nor for the trumpets, and the horses' feet,
And all the bells outringing, till the dome
Of the blue sky seem one Campanula:
It has a thought of other hours with it.
Christ wore it when He wore the crown of thorns,
When first He took His kingdom from their hands:
And the bright maiden wore it to her death,
Whose knife avenged Humanity and France.

Who wears has chosen ; and whoso weareth it
Must wear it to the perilous posts of fate.
Rejoice with me to-day, for it may be
Some day that thou wilt suffer for me too.'
And Ugo said, 'Then will I more rejoice.'
And with his own hands Garibaldi put
His scarlet mantle on him, and he threw
About his neck the slender silver chain
On which he carried still the crucifix.
And in such guise the golden-gleaming hair,
And the inspiring eyes, and tender brows
Shone glorious, and it seemed an angel went
Among us ; and for ever afterwards
Did Ugo Bassi wear the scarlet vest.

In hurried marches Garibaldi crossed
Hither and thither, on whatever side
The enemy was threatening, keeping clear
The Roman country ; and from place to place
Passed Ugo with him, not as priest alone,
But, though unarmed, as a chief officer—
The orderly who from the General's side
Carried his messages to every point
Of peril, and who bore by word of mouth
The call from one to another through the field ;
And for this service Garibaldi gave
The fleetest and most fiery of his steeds
To be his own—Ferina ; and the horse
And rider were the noblest in the camp.

And in those days, the height of the spring-tide,
The voice of Ugo Bassi was a voice
Which any man once hearing could not rest
Till he had heard again, and which, on days
When he was preaching, drew beside the tents
The scattered dwellers of the forest lands
In thousands, ignorant of why they came,
Longing and listening, passionately thrilled
As if by music of another world.
The wild, fierce legionaries, with no law
But Garibaldi's, round him reverently
Knelt, for the first time praying, till his word
Subdued them to some likeness of himself,
And all the camp became a House of God.

Once of himself, about this time, he spoke
These words upon the freeing of his soul
From all the bondage of its early yoke:
'Now have I found obedience that is joy,
Not pain, not conflict of the heart and mind,
But harmony of human souls with God.
Some law there needs be, other than the law
Of our own wills; happy is he who finds
A law wherein his spirit is left free.
Heretofore had I often need to bend
The manhood in me to a childish law,
And, breaking my own will, broke God's will too.
Yea, I have borne hunger, and cold, and pain,
Submissively, as at the hand of God,

And put off my own will, and uttered speech,
Or kept long silence when my heart was full,
And stayed, or gone whither I would not go,
Seeing no reason, much less asking it.
But now no more ;—I will not bend again
My spirit to a yoke that is not Christ's ;
A law that is not of the public voice,
Sacred as God's voice in the midst of us,
Approved by conscience, tried by wisdom, used
By rulers royal in their nature's right ;—
But law of man to man, without consent
Of reason or of justice, and which sets
The smallest tyrant in the place of God,
Yea, oftentimes the weak above the strong.

'The Word of God henceforth shall be enough
For me to live by ; therefore I renounce
This priesthood, which has well performed its part,
Holding the lantern of the Word of God
Through the dark places of dark ages past ;
But now gives place unto the higher law
Of God the Father, and all men His sons,
Without the priest between. Thou hast not left
Thyself, O God, without Thy witnesses !
Thy highest are upon the earth to-day,
Thy Prophet and Thy Soldier. I obey
Him of the sorrowful dark eyes, whose smile
Is as the lightning opening up the heavens ;
And him whose voice above the battle-charge

Rings clearer than the silver trumpets blown
At Easter. Yet, obeying them, I yield
No further than Thy law within my heart
Consents to it ;—and yet I do not fear
Strife in this service, nor a broken bond.

'Yet let not any think, because I part
Myself for ever from the bonds which priests
Have fashioned for our souls for centuries,
It is for any pleasure of the world,
Or softness of the flesh renounced before,
Or solace of an unknown tenderness.
I do not claim life's sweetness, but I claim
Life's liberty, the birthright of a man.
If I withdraw, it is not now to seek
Aught that could make life dearer to myself.
I have not passed so many years of life,
Uncomforted of earthly joys, to need
Such comfort now. Art Thou not mine, O Lord?
I do not think that I shall find a friend
More tender than the One that I have found ;
If He stay by me, I desire no more.'

Once more the Holy War was on the lips
Of all Italian people ; and once more
The hearts of all the nation throbbed with hope
Together, and with an exulting sense
Of one whole year of Italy achieved.
King and Republic on the Lombard plains

Made ready to receive the shock once more
Of Austria's armies, and one brotherhood
Ran through them all, and knitted them in one.
In Rome we waited in a breathless pause
For the first tidings from the battle-field.
It came, it came,—Novara !—all at once
The thundercloud burst on us overhead,
And the stroke fell, and Italy was lost,
And we had nothing left us but despair.

Out of all Italy there now remained
Rome, Venice, and Bologna : we began
To see that crown which had been promised us
Was such a crown as death-struck brows might wear ;
And that the time was past for any hymns
But such as might be sung in Passion Week.

But he who was among us did not lose
The sweet calm smile, the deathless eyes divine
That shone the more unwavering as the gloom
Grew deeper ; and throughout the length and breadth
Of Italy, now fallen, he sent forth
This Proclamation : 'Fellow-countrymen !
—Piedmont betrayed, and Genoa fallen,—all
The soil of Italy given up again
To tyrants or to strangers,—still the life,
The true life, of our Italy, in Rome
Gathers itself. Let Rome then be the heart
Of Italy ; and back from her shall flow

The vital energy, the living warmth,
Through all the scattered members of our race;
And so the name of this fresh Rome of ours,
The Rome of the Republic, shall be blessed.

'To Lombard, Genoese, and Tuscan, all
Our brothers in one country and one faith,
A mother's arms are opened here by Rome.
Here may the soldier find a camp, and here
The unarmed may find shelter in our walls.
For us is nothing altered. Strong in faith
In God and in the People, we remain
Immovable, and still inviolate
Uphold that banner we are bound unto.
Rome is the home of things eternal. Be
Then this Republic an eternal thing,
For the salvation of our Italy,
Which now for inspiration looks alone
To Rome. Here solemnly do we declare
That this Republic, the asylum now,
The bulwark of Italian Liberty,
Will never yield, and never compromise.
Witness, ye Romans, in the Name of God
And of the People, the Triumvirs swear
Their country shall be saved!'

(Yea, saved by fire
The soul of it was for the after-days:
But they who swore it did not save themselves.)

Suddenly rumours, vague and strange, arose
Of a French army landing on our coast;
And with vague doubts, 'Is it as friends or foes?'
But he who ruled us said, 'Let us not wrong
A noble nation by so base a thought,
That they in face of God and man should break
All faith, all honour, and should fall on us
Without a word:—rather let us believe
They come as brothers in our hour of need.'
But there was none could shake the shadow off,
That flew as if with moaning of the wind.

It was the end of April, the last day
But one; and in the morning entered in
A stranger band of warriors through our gates.
Five hundred of the flower of Lombard youth,
Of noble lineage, and heroic proof—
The Bersaglieri, with their floating lengths
Of black plumes, and their dark-green uniform
Enrico and Emilio Dandolo,
The brothers,—Morosini,—and their chief,
Lucian Manara, foremost. They had come,
Having defended Milan to the last,
After the fall of Lombardy, to find
A grave in Rome. 'For you have need,' they said,
'Of every soldier you can muster now.
The French are on you. Hardly could we make
Our way in arms to you across the lines
Of Oudinot, who holds the shore and forts,

And kept us back from landing. We have marched
Here from Civita Vecchia, but obtained
A passage only through the terms we bring,
Proposing to you :—To surrender Rome
Into the hands of the French General,
Who will be by to-morrow at your gates,
(And guarantees the interests of all,
A moderate and judicious liberty
Under the flag of the French Government ;—)
Or failing free and peaceable consent,
Be ready to submit to him perforce.
—We are at your disposal to the death.'

And travel-worn, and toil-worn from their strife
By sea and land, this young and noble band
Of her defenders through the streets of Rome
Passed, with acclaiming of the multitudes.

And the Assembly met in haste, to frame
An answer to the summons, and resolved
That to no foreign force should Rome submit,
But should defend herself, and hold her own.
Yet some there were who wavered, and who said,
'It is in vain. To overwhelming force
Let us submit in time : we must at last.
Where have we arms enough for our defence ?'
Whereon Mazzini answered, 'I have faith
In Rome. It seems to me, I understand
This Roman people better than yourselves.

Let us now summon all our legions here
Before the Palace, and here proffer them
The question, Peace or War?' And from the ranks
One universal shout of War! arose,
And drowned all timid counsels and weak doubts.

And for the rest, Mazzini in his heart
Held his own counsel: for he after said,
'Well did I know that Victory for us
Was equally impossible without
Our ramparts or within them. But I knew,
Therefore, that since it was our fate to fall,
It was our duty, for the future's sake,
For us to turn on Italy from Rome
Our last look loyal,—"*Morituri te*
Salutant!"' So the doom of Rome was sealed.

All Rome was turned into a camp that day;
In haste and tumult for her own defence.
All day incessantly the Romans worked
Upon the walls, the gates, the barricades;
The batteries were strengthened, and the charge
Laid in the cannon; all along the ridge
Of Monte Mario with the cypress-groves,
The bastions were repaired and fortified,
And the battalions of the guard encamped.
All the vast square of the Basilica,
Saint Peter's, with its pillared colonnades,
Was turned into a camp; and open stood

Porta Angelica ; while through it pressed
The clamorous streams of peasants, with their droves
Of sheep and oxen, and their loaded wains ;
And breathlessly, amid the martial stir,
The people waited for a great event.

The sun was going down, when suddenly
Along the dazzling streets a cry arose
Of 'Garibaldi ! Garibaldi !'—There
Was the mysterious hero, come to us
Unsummoned, and unknowing of our need,
But sent by God to us, upon the eve
Of battle. After him, his legions came ;
But slowly, slowly, through the multitudes
That swayed in wildest welcome round his path,
And made the air a waving wind of joy,
As if the Archangel Michael from the clouds
Had lighted, to the succour of the great
Beleaguered city. While amidst them all,
He with deep eyes, silent and resolute,
Rode slowly up the steep of golden sand
To San Pietro in Montorio.

And who was this came riding after him
On the white battle-horse? As he passed by,
With the monk's garment gone, and the unshorn hair
Floating, and the starry, rapture-lighted eyes
Among the Romans, I myself drew back,
At first amazed, and thought I had not seen

A manhood so majestic yet on earth.
But when his eyes fell on me, and he said,
'Antonio,' then I knew the tender voice
Was still the same, and would not change for me.

They held a bivouac in Saint Peter's Place.
All night the watch-fires blazed, and torches flared,
And sound of hammers and of hurrying feet
Through Rome resounded; with the dawning came
A lull, and we were ready. Dull and grey
That morning of the thirtieth April broke.

It was one hour before the stroke of noon—
Suddenly all the palaces were shaken
By one reverberating clap of sound;
A startled cry from every house in Rome
Broke, and was lost amid the gathering roar;
The great bell from the Capitol tolled out
Above it, and from Mount Citorio
The tocsin, silent for three hundred years,
Pealed to the battle; and their voices rolled
Into the thunder of the cannonade,
And the sharp volleys of the musketeers.
From every casement all along the street
The heads of women leant; from every door
Burgher and noble, priest and artisan,
Rushed to the walls; and, with the first shot fired,
A thrill of deathless passion ran through Rome.

Around the base of Mount Janiculum
Lies the stone girdle of the Roman wall;
Porta Cavalleggieri to the right,
And Porta San Pancrazio to the left,
As you look downwards. Towards these gates advanced
The French to the attack; but as they neared
Porta Cavalleggieri their left wing
Divided, and the outermost passed round
The salient angle of the Vatican,
Directed on the Gate Angelica;
While, for a mile outside the city walls,
The gardens of the Villa Pamphili
And skirting vineyards of the road were held
By Garibaldi. Here the first shock came,
In the open ground. Down, with the bayonets
He and his soldiers rushed upon the foe;
And dark and terrible the war-clouds closed
Over the desperate combat, hand to hand.
The Tigers, as men named them in those days,
Of Monte Video, and the African
Lions were matched, and locked in furious strife.

All in and out among the trodden vines,
The cypress avenues and lovely lawns
Of the Doria Gardens, did this first fight rage,
Watched by the Romans from the heights above,
With Garibaldi in the midst of it,
And the white horse of Ugo galloping
From one to another of the scattered troops,

With orders from the General, till in midst
Of the balls showering, horse and rider fell;
The horse shot dead, but the bold messenger
Unharmed,—who still on foot across the field
Made way, intent on serving such as lay
Dying or wounded. Ebbed and flowed the tide
Of victory; sometimes the ground was gained
By the assailants, sometimes forced from them.
But when at last the firing ceased, the French
Were in retreat, and in our hands had left
Nearly three hundred prisoners.
In meantime
The left attacking columns had made way,
Sheltered by walls of villas, and by vines,
Unnoticed almost to the very walls.
But at the very moment when the sun
First flashed upon their arms, the Roman fire
Opened in front upon them, all along
The terrace gardens of the Vatican;
While in their rear, from Monte Mario
Our cannon thundered; and Saint Angelo
Let loose its lightnings on them all at once.
They, overnumbered, baffled, and mowed down,
Held their ground bravely, but at last retired,
Disordered, to the covert of the vines,
And sought a passage of retreat to join
The right again. Thus on the left and right
Were they repulsed. Then Oudinot, to lose
No further time, brought forward all his troops

Again to the first position, reinforced
By fresh battalions. Then began again
That Battle of the Garden :—for four hours
The mortal combat on whose issue hung
Rome, raged with fury, and with equal chance.
But Garibaldi in the midst was there,
Erect on horseback, with his streaming hair,
Bronze like a statue's, and the eyes that ruled
The fortunes of the field. Was it those eyes
That turned the trembling scales for us at last?
For after desperate fighting we remained
Masters; and on all sides the French fell back
In full retreat, and leaving in our hands
Their dead and wounded, and five hundred men
Prisoners. Our victory was complete that day.

The triumph and the joy of Rome that night
All can remember who were found in her.
The whole wide city was lit up with fire
Of coloured lamps, and all her people streamed
With songs and glorious music through her streets,
Or to the open churches, thanking God.

But one alone was missing. Ugo came
Not homewards with the fighters from the field,
Nor was there any trace of him, and none
Could tell where he had vanished. His dead horse
Lay on the hill-side, but no Ugo lay
Among the fallen; Garibaldi said

That he had missed him after the first fight,
And no one since had seen him. Fear and gloom
Amid the glare of victory fell on me,
And Garibaldi would not rest that night,
But went on seeking for him.
All night long,
Through the rich moonlight that brought in the May,
I wandered in a wild and ceaseless quest
About the maze of those enchanted bowers
And grassy glades of Villa Pamphili;
Through the great avenues of evergreen
Oaks, past the giant shadow of the pines,
Out on to the white lawns and glittering flow
Of waterfalls and fountains. Miles of green
Stretched shadowy in the moonlight; marble forms
Stood clear among them, bathed in glistening light.
The flowers were folded, waiting for the burst
Of the May morning. Upon every branch
The nightingales were ringing out the night,
Unheedful of the silent, busy forms
That gathered round the dead for burial;
Unheedful of torn boughs and trampled turf
And blood-besprinkled beds of lilies, where
Some lay in their last sleep. On every side
Were strewn the signs of that day's ravages.
I looked into the face of every one
That lay there silent;—I found friend and foe
Rigid together under the bright moon,
Among the bruised and dying cyclamens;

And my heart trembled before every one;
But still I found not Ugo; and as day
Came on, I still pursued the fruitless search
From here to Rome, and asked from every one
Some news in vain: till in the afternoon,
I found myself within Saint Pancras gate,
And faint and wretched sank upon a bench
Amid the stream of passers; and my head
Dropped in my hands.
I heard the many feet
Go by me, in a dream, a dreary dream
From which I could not wake; I heard the voice
Of many a citizen sound close to me,
With triumph in its tone;—when suddenly
Among the steps and voices came one step
Straight onward, and I knew it, and looked up;
And there before me, the far-seeing eyes
And the commanding form of Ugo passed,
A little worn and weary, and with dust
And tear of travel. But I could not speak;
Only my face caught his face, and he stopped;
And said amazed, 'Antonio, what is this?
Am I a ghost that you should look so scared?
What has come to you?' But when I at last
Had told my tale, and how not I alone,
But Garibaldi, suffered in suspense,
He took me also on his way to him
At San Pietro in Montorio,
And told me all the story as we went.

For in the first fierce conflict, he was close
To one of our own soldiers, mortally
Wounded, and dying; whom within his arms
He held, and listened to the last faint sobs
Of his confession, when the bugle-call
Sounded retreat, and in the varying tide
Of the day's fortune our side was compelled
To yield the ground. All fell away at once;
But Ugo, kneeling, would not loose the clasp
Of the cold fingers that still clung to his,
Nor, while the death-film gathered o'er the eyes,
Did the bright vision of his aspect pass
Away above them. As the French rushed on,
Furious, to take the long-contested spot,
They found that one unarmed bright enemy,
Whom they surrounded, and the dying man
Breathed his last sigh upon the sheltering breast,
Untouched of them; but roughly, in their rage,
They handled Ugo, and were hardly held
By their commander from destroying him.
And he, their prisoner, marched with them that day
For fifteen miles' retreat along the road;
Nor did they treat him well, for no one gave
Him food or drink, and all the night he lay
Without a cloak or shelter, on the grass,
Heavy with dew; but at midday was brought
To the head-quarters, where the General
Delivered to him letters, praying terms
Of armistice, to the Triumvirate;

And set him free to carry them to Rome;
But bound him by a promise to return
If these should be refused. So Ugo came
On foot again to Rome, fatigued but safe,
And to the heads of the Republic took
His message.

But they sent him back, because
They would not grant the terms. Nevertheless
An armistice on other grounds was made,
And truce proclaimed between the camps, and each
Retained its own position, far apart;
And envoys between Rome and Paris passed;
And hopes were entertained of happy peace
Between the two Republics. Oudinot
Sent Ugo Bassi back to us next day
In token of good-will. And on our side,
Mazzini, who could never yet believe
That others were less noble than himself,
Set unconditionally free the whole
Of our five hundred prisoners, who had been
Treated with every honour as our guests.
And ere we parted from them, solemn prayers
They joined in at Saint Peter's, offered up
For them, and for ourselves, and for the whole
Fraternity of Peoples; and by throngs
Of the rejoicing people to the gates
Were led, and were saluted in farewell.

At that time it was often talked about

In hot debate, that, on the First of May,
If Garibaldi had not been withheld
By the Triumvirate, he would have gone
Straight in pursuit of the disordered foe,
And would have hemmed them in in their retreat,
And have destroyed them, cut off from the sea;
And Rome would have been saved. I cannot tell:
Wisdom is easy after the event.
Ten thousand, ay, ten million, eyes are sharp
As needles, to prick holes in deeds performed,
For the one eye of eagle that can mark
The moment's action, and strike straight at it.

The military hospitals, for those
Who had been wounded, whether friend or foe,
Were tended by the noblest hands in Rome.
And Ugo daily ministered in them;
I being under him:—and I, likewise,
Was now appointed to a special post
Of service with the ambulance, in case
Of further fighting. On one eve I went,
Bearing a message from the hospital
To the head-quarters of the cavalry
On Mount Janiculum; and there I found
Ugo with Garibaldi. All the doors
Of the great Convent were set open wide,
And in the cloisters were the horses ranged;
And the wild soldiers filled the rambling courts,
And noisily pursued their sports around

The sacred Temple of the Cross. But out
Upon the quiet terrace of the church,
Red in the sunset, walked those two apart;
All Rome beneath them; and beyond it far,
The plain of flooded light up to the bound
Of the crimson hills; and overhead a sky
That glowed with every glory of the rose,
And held the earth within it, as it were,
All glorious together. Ugo said:
'This hill is sacred that we stand upon,
For its Saint's sake. Can we but think of him?
'No,' Garibaldi said, 'I am no priest;
And do not overmuch admire the Saints.
And Ugo spoke again: 'I can but think
Of one who was most happy, standing here.
This is his City; his Basilica
Lies at our feet; and all the prayers of the world
Draw thither in a ceaseless pilgrimage;
And whoso once stands in it cannot loose
Its shadow from his soul. Did he not here
Conquer this city, which had conquered earth,
To be his Master's? Is there any place
Around us, but he first did consecrate
To the new kingdom? One may sweep away
His throne; but cannot sweep the spirit of him
From the air of Rome:—but what was this to him
Here? Was there anything in earth or heaven
That could come nigh him on this last steep height,

But the one joy too great for heart to bear,—
But the One Face so soon to see again?'

They turned into the church, and I with them;
The great and gloomy church was dark and cold;
The pictures of the Passion on the walls
Made one feel glad that one was not a Saint.
The altar-piece of Peter crucified
Was happily but little to be seen.
But Garibaldi walked with Ugo still,
Conversing, up and down the shadowy aisles,
Untroubled, until Ugo drew him close
To the high altar, and at foot of it
Showed him a bare flat stone, and said to him:
'Here let thy feet fall softly. Dost thou know
Whose grave this is, without a cross or name?'

'No,' Garibaldi said, 'I do not know
Of any grave. Perhaps another Saint?'

'Nay,' answered Ugo, 'not of priests and popes;—
They who delivered her over to her doom
For the price of fifty thousand golden crowns:
But of the number of the innocent souls,—
Those that were slain, whom God beholds in heaven,
Under the altar crying still to Him,
And has not sent an answer yet to earth.
Yet shall this stone not keep His ears from her
Who lies beneath it for two hundred years,

The Roman Beatrice,—buried here
Without a priest, or prayer, and left alone
In death. What more could any do for her?
The first soft touch that ever came to her
Was here, where hands, that could not spare nor save
Strewed her with violets from head to foot,
And laid the heavy stone to keep her safe
From any harm of hateful human hand.

'It seems to me, if any one to-day
Could lift it up, that we should see her there,
Without a shadow of change from then till now.
She is lying there with that same face we know;
The young limbs lovely, and the child's bright head
Have not had time to lose their deep delight,
Lying where none can tear them from their rest.
The sweet lips keep their last look infantile;
The young and sleepless eyes are shut at last;
The untwisted golden hair falls over her;
The soft hands are folded like a child's that lies
Beside its mother; you can hardly see
Whether she breathes or not, she lies so still.
If there be any violent bruise or streak,
The shadow of the violets smooths it down.

'If so, indeed, she stay beneath our feet,—
And I myself can almost feel her peace
Around me in the still and sacred air,—
It were but little of a miracle,

For the miracle that kept the flower of her soul
Alone in the unspeakable abyss,
Stronger than adamant, softer than the spring,
Serene and shining, and ineffable,
A lily steeped in crimson by the rush
Of the wings of dawn, star-clear within itself,
Trembling with tenderness to every touch,
So that her lips smiled once before she died,
With consolation to the hearts that broke
Only with looking on her,—smiled, and said,
"Let me not grieve you;—but thank God for me
That now my life is over." . . .
Now arrived
At Rome the news that sounded like a knell,—
Bologna fallen:—after a defence
Heroic to the last, but of despair,
She was delivered up into the hands
Of General Gorzhowski, known from all
The other Austrian generals of that day
By a pre-eminence of evil fame.
And such tales came to us as made the blood
Boil in our veins, of shameful violence done,
Rapine and devastation, fire and sword,
And brutal insolence of force that flung
Mocking and shame at those it trampled on.

And unavailing passion rent the heart
Of Rome; but Ugo's heart was rent with loss
Of his own city; and he could not rest

For thinking of her; and his eyes began
To take a sadder shadow than their wont.

While there was truce between the French and us,
The army of the king of Naples moved
Within our borders, and possessed themselves
Of all the open country, and encamped
In fortified Velletri, whence they held
A post of menace for us from the South.
Therefore the Roman army was sent forth
Against them. Garibaldi led the way,
With Ugo Bassi riding by his side,
His officer of ordonnance; (for when
His horse was shot, had Garibaldi given
Another to him). But I had besought
Of Ugo Bassi, and almost with tears,
That he would take me with him; for I said,
'O Master, it was terrible, that day
When none could find thee; and thou goest now
Into fresh perils, and who knows what fate?'
But he made answer, 'None may go with us,
But such as are accustomed to the march.
God's hand is over thee and me alike,
Whether we go or stay: but stay thou here,
And tend my sick for me while I am gone.'
And they through many toils and dangers passed
Up to Velletri; and a battle there
Was fought, and all the army of the king
Was beaten back, and fled; and they retook

Velletri ; and returned in triumph home,
And safe ; and on the Twenty-fourth of May
Re-entered Rome amid wild cries of joy.
But Ugo had been wounded in the foot,
Though slightly, galloping across the line
Of the enemy's fire, to hurry up the troops
Commanded by Manara to the front.

Nearly were articles of peace, and terms
Of honourable concord, signed between
Lesseps, the Envoy, and the Triumvirs ;
When counter-orders came to Oudinot,
Who suddenly, upon the First of June
Broke off negotiations, and thus wrote :
'My orders will admit of no delay.
I am to enter Rome ;—whether by force
Or by free-will, it is for you to choose.
We give you till the morning of the Fourth ;—
Within that time surrender if you will ;—
If not, I take it by assault at once.'

Hardly was any answer deigned to this
Last summons ; but the Romans, young and old,
Flocked to the walls and batteries, and worked
With a redoubled spirit. And in front
Ever was Ciceruacchio, with the band
Of workmen volunteers, who followed him
As pioneers and sappers ; and the strong
Arms, and the deep and ever-mirthful voice

Of that one man alone did work enough
In any day for six days' common hire.
The Fourth was Monday: and upon the night
Of the Second, many of us said, We will
Rest on the morrow, and rejoice once more.
After this Sabbath shall we sleep again?

But this was not to be: for on the night
Between the Second and the Third, when we,
Relying on our adversary's word,
Believed we had another day to spare,
The army of the French moved silently
From its position, and advanced on us,
And through the darkness reached our outer works;
And glided silently between the lines
Of myrtle hedges that there mark the way,
And came upon our sentinel, who cried
'Who goes there?' and the answer was returned,
'Viva l'Italia!'—so the first passed in
Without alarm; and with a poniard-thrust
The sentinel lay quiet at his post.
And following them, the column rushed inside,
Killing and taking prisoners on their way
The unprepared and scattered men-at-arms:
And swiftly, silently, and suddenly
Taking possession thus of all our posts
Outside the walls;—the Villa Pamphili,
The Villas Valentini, Corsini.
Only remained the one nearest the gates,

Villa Vascello. While, at the same time,
Their left had marched on Monte Mario,
And also in the darkness had surprised
The unsuspecting guards; and seized the works
Of the defence, the heights that overlooked
The city, and had turned them on ourselves.

Such of the guards as were not overpowered,
Rushed to the gate of San Pancrazio, crying,
'To arms! To arms!' and from the ramparts there
The cannon opened fire upon the posts
Carried by the besiegers; and the French
Close by poured in a furious fusillade.
And at the sound the drums began to beat,
And with a gathering clang the bells joined in.—
In the uncertain glimmer of the dawn
Was Rome awaked to find her outposts won
By treachery.

. . . . . .
. . . . . .

[The account of the taking of Rome by assault and bombardment, and its heroic defence, can be found in several other books. It was therefore left to the last by the Author, who is now overtaken by illness, and forced to relinquish her work.]

JULY 2ND.

Then Garibaldi gathered all his troops
Around him, in Saint Peter's Place, and said:
'My place is here no longer. Rome has fallen.
She has forbidden us to strike again
For her defence. I will not stay to see
The foreign army pass along her streets
Victorious. Still, against the foreigner
Shall never struggle cease in Italy,
While I can live for her. I go to bear
Her last resistance through the provinces,
God helping us alone. Whoever wills
To follow me, I will receive to-day.
Nothing I ask from them to make them mine,
But love for Italy and faith in her.
They will have neither pay nor rest with me;
But bread and water,—if we have the chance
To find so much. I cannot promise them
Even a grave; nothing is sure but death.
Whoever is not satisfied with this,
Had better come no further. Every step
Will be a step towards death, when once the gates
Of Rome have closed behind us. Who will come?—
Meet me at six o'clock this evening, here.'

These are the words that Garibaldi wrote
Long afterwards, remembering this day:

'Four thousand men on foot, nine hundred horse
Ranged themselves round me. And the first who came
To join themselves to me, that hour, were these;—
Anita, Ciceruacchio and his sons,
And the saint, Ugo Bassi, who aspired
To martyrdom. The rest in order came.
Towards evening, by the gate of Tivoli,
I quitted Rome. My heart was sad as death.'

And the same hour the French came into Rome.

VI.

July, 1849.

And now, when Ugo Bassi would depart
With Garibaldi, I again besought
That he would take me with him; and he said,
'I will not say thee Nay this time. Who wills,
May follow now. Come; thou art one of us;
There will not be too many on this march.'
So with the rest I went, carrying with me
The musket that was given me, when I took
My turn upon the walls of Rome. We left
By different gates, having for meeting-place
A spot about four miles outside the walls.
I by the gate of Saint Sebastian passed
Along the Appian Way. The night was warm;
The moonlight and the shadows of the tombs
Chequered the ground in silver and in black;
The yellow berries of the ivy hung,
Whitened with dust, above the roadside walls.
After two miles we halted by the church,
Where Peter met our Lord upon the road,
And said to him, 'Quo vadis, Domine?'

And there we waited for another band.
Behind us still we heard, or seemed to hear,
The stir of Rome, though now, for the first time
For many months, no guns disturbed the night:
Behind us rose the shadow of the hills.
—We felt the gates were passed, and never more
Should any one of us re-enter Rome.

Here were we joined by others; and by trains
Of ammunition, strings of loaded mules,
And waggons; and the companies were formed
In order: Ugo Bassi was with us.
It was near midnight when the word arrived
To start afresh. The moon was at the full,
So that there was no need of other light.
There in the moonlight, in the midst of us,
When all of us were ready, he stood out,
And said, 'Will any now go back to Rome?
The way is plain; the gates are open still;
There is yet time.' But no one answered him.
And all of us stood still, regarding him:
For as he stood, a look came over him,
Which, as we gazed, seemed to us that he saw
Another coming; and some other eyes
Were meeting his; and slow and sure the feet
Unsandalled drew towards him, and there came
The rustling of a garment white and long
Approaching—and the two were face to face;
And Ugo's voice was passionately near.

'O Lord, the same this night that long ago,
Here in the moonlight, in the midnight came!
So that Thy very footprint still is left
Upon the stones; and we, too, stand and pass
On the same dusty road between the tombs,
On to an end which yet we cannot see,
But in Thy service, and at Thy command;
We do not fear to meet Thy face to-night
Without its smile! Thou standest in our midst,
And all our hearts are comforted and calm.
Keep us Thine own;—and keep us in the way
Thou first hast trodden:—we are going now
Whither we know not; only go with us!
Thou wilt not set Thy face to Rome to-night,
But out into the wilderness with us.
Be Thou beside us, and in all our need
Suffer us not to fall away from Thee.
And if at any hour, at any pass
Of our extremity, our hearts should fail,
And the betrayal tremble to our lips,
Turn on us Thy reproachful eyes again,—
Whose least sad look can strike the falsehood back,
Sharper than many swords; whose least low word
Sets the face steadfast through the thundering storm;
Whose least light touch can smooth the bars of fire
Into a bed of roses,—look on us!
O Lord, stay with us, and we ask no more!'

Then to the left we turned; and made our way

Across the fields and vineyards, and by lanes,
To join the others, who had come from Rome
By Porta San Giovanni. The night air,
Laden with jasmine and magnolia scents,
Had yet a sulphurous odour above all,
Though clear; and peace seemed not on all the earth.
About a mile from the Tiburian road,
Southwards, we halted, having met and joined
The others; and the whole five thousand thence
Set off together, led through the by-ways
By Ciceruacchio; for it was the aim
Of Garibaldi to avoid the road,
Seeing three armies were about our way,
To track, and seize, and crush us. But he said:
'We may escape them all, if we but wind
Among them, by the paths they least suspect;
And once amidst the mountains, numbers count
For little.' So we stole across the plain.

Full dark was Garibaldi's face that night;
And mounted close beside him went his wife,
Anita, with her glory of dark eyes
That spoke for her, and held his heart in hers;
The beautiful Flower of the New World that he
Had gathered in a garden not his own;
Who had lost the world, and lost her soul for love,
And followed him through flood, and field, and fire,
And borne him children, and had been to him
The angel in the battle and the storm;

And now was nigh to bearing her fourth child,
Having left her little children safe in charge,
When she came into Rome to share the siege.
Her face was sadder than I yet had seen.
And close by them went Ugo, at the word
Of Garibaldi; for he said, 'Thy place
Be ever nearest me. We have not known
Each other long; and little have we had
Of joy together—let us have to-day.
After, who knows how long our life may last?
I would not lose one hour, away from thee.'
I followed some way after, with the rear.

Next morning we arrived at Tivoli,
And rested there through the day's heat. The day
Of cloudless splendour yet remains with me;
The blossom-spray of myrtle burst and foamed
All round us, like the silver foam and spray
Of dazzling waters sliding from the heights.
The gardens of that Paradise on Earth
Were made for such as had not known a care:
But among us, the sick and restless awe
Was brooding, of the future and the past;
We, fugitives between three armies loosed
Upon us, soldiers of a flag gone down,
Digging our own graves where we should lie low
With our dead hopes, and knowing that our fate
Had severed us already from our lives.

At close of day we passed from Tivoli
To Monticelli ;—there abode the night :
And still across the plain we went next day,
By rough and narrow roads ; and as the day
Sank, through a little village, thick in vines,
We laboured, called Mentana ; and in front
Beheld the great hill break out of the plain,
Monte Rotondo ; we were glad when we
Reached it, and camped around it for the night.
Thence for a little way we followed on
The Via Salaria, the old Roman road
That leads one to Rieti ; then struck off
To left across the country, leaving all
Safe roads and smooth ; and after four days' toil,
Over a wilderness of mountain lands,
The wild untrodden heart of Italy,
Arrived at Terni, having all our store
Of baggage and of ammunition safe.

Meanwhile the troops of Naples, France, and Spain,
By every straight road leading out of Rome
Had been pursuing us, but found us not.

At Terni, in the shelter of the hills,
Two days we stayed : and there nine hundred men,
Part of the legion of America,
Joined company with us. The second night
We set off on our wanderings again.
We took the road five miles below the Falls ;

We could not see them for the woods between,
But to our ears the far-off thunder still
Came down the valley ; and at one wild turn,
The deep sound drew me, and I looked behind,
And all at once, unutterably clear,
Far off I saw a liquid precipice
Hang high in heaven above the dark-green hills—
Glorious and awful. Passing under cliffs
Of limestone, with great caverns in their sides,
We rested at San Gemini, and thence,
A rugged road crossing the mountain ridge,
Brought us to Todi ;—there we stayed some days

Here were we met by secret embassies
From Tuscany, who prayed of us to come
Into their midst, they being ripe, they said,
For a fresh rising, and the people all
Maddened with indignation as they saw
The insolent Croats in their City of Flowers
Go masters ;—but the garrisons were weak,
And might be overpowered by a surprise.
So Garibaldi shifted course, and made
Thither, in hope of fortune's favouring him.
Both of the high-roads into Tuscany
The Austrians held ; the Neapolitans
Were close behind us ; and the French had reached
And occupied Viterbo on the left.
The gates of the Legations, too, were closed
By Wimpffen and Gorzhowski, who had marched

To guard the Apennines :—on every side
The fatal ring of fire encircled us.

But Garibaldi broke through it. He sent
Light troops of horse below the very walls
Of hostile garrisons on either side,
Foligno and Viterbo, to draw off
Hither and thither the pursuing hosts ;
While part to northward crossed the Tiber near
Thrasimene ; and he himself remained
At Todi, waiting till they should converge
Towards Cetona, where they should await
Himself ; and then struck off for the same point.

We left behind at Todi all we had
Superfluous, horses, waggons, heavy guns,
And ammunition, and set out again
To our adventure, little left to lose.
A hilly bridle-road for eighteen miles
Led us all day by lonely ups and downs ;
Without a sound save the innumerable
Streams of the mountains, falling either side
Towards the rivers. Early in the day
We crossed the Tiber, and from hour to hour
Forded the waters in their summer beds.
But in the afternoon we found a bridge
Across a greater river, and again
Another river with another bridge
Met us, and flashing down the valley rolled

To meet the first ; but we passed farther on
To Orvieto ; and at sunset saw
The city rise before us, walled, and set
Upon the last rock of the long sheer range
Volcanic, stretching straight across the plain
In vertical escarpments, lava-black.
And separated, at the end of all,
An island at a promontory's point,
The bare steep circuit, with its citadel,
Eight hundred feet above the washing waves
Of Paglia round its base, and crowded up
With roofs and turrets to its midmost height,
Where its Crown Jewel, its Duomo, stood,
Bearing aloft its golden western front
High in the sunset over all the land.

But the next day alarm was raised, the French
Were marching from Viterbo, and in haste
We left ; but from the heights we saw the road
Across the plain to southward hid in clouds
Of dust, and through the clouds the blueish glint
Of the advancing columns. Half an hour
After we quitted Orvieto, they
Were in it. This day by the road we went,
A march of fifteen miles. At first, down hill
Until we crossed the rivers ; then the way
Ascended to La Croce. All the land
Was lovely : far and clear around us lay
The olive-softened hills of Tuscany,

One fresh and fertile garden every side ;
Perpetual quick blue rivers flowed and sang
Down the green valleys, meeting now and then
In cool delicious beds of foaming white ;
The violet gladiolus in the corn
Drooped with its glory ; and the way-side rose
Blossomed in every fragile crimson change ;
The yellow garland-flower, the melilot,
Hung its trails over us from bush and brake
As though we had been conquerors. As we rose
Higher, we skirted forests of the oak,
And glades of grass and fern. But we were tired,
And hungered, and footsore ; and felt our foes
Beforehand with us whither we might turn,
And were uncertain whether we might meet
Our comrades, or what fate the day might bring ;
And would have rather seen some homely place
Of rest, and refuge, and security,
Than any fairest landscape upon earth.
That night we reached Ficulle : and next day
On the same road went forward without check.
By evening we had mounted to a ridge
Parting the torrents to the east and west,
And marched along its summit till we reached
Città della Pieve, which we made
Our next night s halting-place.
From this we left
The road, and marched all day across a wild
And solitary country to the west.

At first through forests ; then the ground became
More broken and more barren,—tracts of moor,
Brushwood of myrtle, heath, and arbutus,
With here and there a solitary pine ;
And the wild deer fled from us, and wild birds
Flew off in flocks ; but we passed on, until
The moorland gave its moss and turf alone
Unto our feet, and grassy hills arose
On every side of us, in strange great shapes,
As though they had been fashioned by the hands
Of giants ; and a phantom wind arose,
And moaned through them at evening ; and we wound
Through narrowing defiles, where on either hand
The walls were hollowed into sepulchres,
Line above line, with awful ancient doors
For dwellers taller than the race of men,
All desolate and silent, with large rows
Of letters, carved in some unknown dead tongue
Still speaking to us—a green place of tombs ;
Nor trace of any city, but of one
Great Nation of the Dead : and farther on
The valley opened out upon a sea
Of swelling hillocks, and among them rose
Green hills like pyramids, and every one
Hollowed in chambers and in labyrinths,
Tomb after tomb ; and all the turf was fine,
And flocks of sheep amid the solitudes
Were grazing, and black birds among them walked.

At evening, turning past a higher range,
We saw in sudden light, without a cloud,
A great black mountain with torn peaks stand up
Alone against us for four thousand feet;
And climbed up to Cetona, with white walls
Half-hid in olives, nestling at its base.
The other companies had here arrived
In the day's course, and occupied the fort,
The Austrians having fled at their approach.
Here Garibaldi rested for a day;
And reconnoitred, but without success,
Toward Siena.
Here the roll was called
Of all who still were following. But alas!
Already had our number fallen off
Almost by half: many had lagged behind,
Ill, or exhausted; many had given up
A hopeless quest, and sought security;
And some, dishonour to a noble cause,
Had cast off all restraint, and strayed away
For pillage and for rapine. When we left
Cetona, we were but three thousand men.

Through the rich ancient heart of Tuscany,
Three days our course continued, still pursued
Closely; at Monte Pulciano first
We halted; at Foiano the next day;
And at Castiglione on the third.
And still advancing, saw with hope the walls

Of old Arezzo, stretching up the hill.
There we expected welcome ; but we found
The gates were closed against us, and the towers
Threatened us ; for the Austrian garrison
Had overawed the people, and the troops
Of the Archduke were close upon the town.
The Austrians were around us all next day,
And kept us from the roads ; we had to pass
By rugged devious tracks along the hills,
And so arrived, hemmed in on every side,
Upon the summit of a mount, where stands
Citerna. Here we had no breathing-time :
On every side of us the enemy
Were closing in. We raised a false alarm,
By feint of marching northward ; and when night
Closed in upon us, Garibaldi bade
We should depart in silence to the east
We raised our camp in fear and cautiousness ;
And all night long we toiled by rocky paths
And perilous, so narrow that we scarce
Singly could pass along them ; it was dark ;
We hardly thought that we should live to see
Another day's light ;—but at dawn we came,
Still living, to the little frontier town,
San Giustino ; but we might not rest.

Deeper and deeper, up into the heart
Of the wild Apennines, we still pressed on,
Through paths known only to the muleteer

And goatherd ; we were well-nigh spent with thirst,
And hunger, and fatigue ; the fierce sun beat
Upon the burning rocks ; and ever up
And up we went ; and many vultures too
Were following us ; and some lay down and died.
But all whose strength would hold, still dragged them selves
On, not to let the terrible wilderness
Serve for their sepulchre ; for all among
The cliffs, we saw the caverns of the bears ;
And through the night wild fox and tiger-cat
Streamed from the savage ledges out of reach :
And well we knew no kindly foot should come
That way again, nor any bones of ours
Be found of friends. and buried by the way :
Yes, I am glad that I did not die there !

But Garibaldi's face was still as one's
That looks upon a sunset, and the light
Streams back into his eyes. And Ugo's wore
The utter peace of one whose life is hid
In God's own hand. And through the day's fatigue,
Those two alike apparelled still went on
Foremost, and side by side. And I, being sure
Of foot, and mountain-bred, fared easier
Amid the perils of the way than most ;
And when the track was lost, and down below
The precipice fell off to the abyss,
And round a jutting shoulder there appeared

No footing, and it was more difficult
To turn than to go on ; then Ugo called
Me to the front, and I went on with them
First, to make clear a passage for the rest ;
And all the day I went in front with them,
And helped across the straitest of the pass
To bear the litter where Anita lay,
Who now could fare no further upon foot.
And Garibaldi spoke to me, and once
Commended me, nor did I part all day
Out of the sight of those two friends and chiefs :
But henceforth stayed beside them, and the way
Seemed not so terrible when they were near.
And though I know that Garibaldi's face,
And splendour of eyes, and tawny mane of hair
Are yet not to be matched in all the world,
I thought the other, taller and more spare,
With the fatigue beginning to tell now
Upon the clear and spiritual face,
And the dark hollows underneath the eyes,
Not the less beautiful : and often mused
On the strange fate that had elected me
To be so near to heroes, and to share
Such noble things, and in their hour of need
To be obedient to them, and to serve
Him whom I loved the best of all the world.

At sunset, after twenty-four hours' march,
We reached the extreme summit of the chain

Of Apennine ; and knew that here at least
We were secure a little while. So then
We lit the camp-fires, staying for the night.
But little food was there, and little sleep
On the bare rock that night for any of us.
And I remember still the hour that came
Before the sunrise, in that mountain hold,
As the next day drew on ; and all around,
The crowning peaks grew visible in air,—
Range upon range of solemn shapes that wore
All the live hues of the anemone,
Crimson, and purple, and deep dawning blues ;
And morning-mist below them ; and above,
The growing golden spaces of the light.
And then the silent burst of sunrise, with
The long, low violet shadows swept across
From mountain unto mountain ; and at once,
From three far separate crags I saw the rise
Of three great hovering eagles, each alone,
Each in his kingdom of another day.
But oh ! the freshness of that kindling dawn
In that untrodden fastness ; and the breath
Of the first breeze that streamed from height to height
All youth was in it, and the coming tale
Of the long summer's day ; a day it was
That one might wake to, saying, ' If we live
Till evening, we shall not have failed of bliss.
Some mystery of joy in every hour
Lying folded, as the rose-leaves in the rose.

But we who hailed that dawning, knew the day
Should be but one day's march the nearer death;
And stiff and sleepless, famished and footsore,
Haggard and torn, like spectres of ourselves,
Lifted our aching limbs to bear us on;
Knowing that ere another night came round,
They might ache worse, with wounds, or chains, or stripes;
And hardly knowing if we wished to live.
And as the curling mists began to move
Around the narrow passes of the hills,
We watched their wavering with uneasy eyes,
And thought we saw the columns of the foe
Wind through the gateways of our last retreat;
And started at each shadow of the clouds.

Descending by the rugged eastern side,
We, on the twenty-eighth of July, reached
San Angelo in Vado; but could find
No resting-place; and nearly were surprised,
Leaving the town:—the Austrians had come up
With our rear-guard, and in a desperate fight,
These forced a passage through the enemy,
And came up to rejoin us, by steep paths
The others could not follow. On we went,
Breathlessly, daring not to look behind.

And now, reduced to these extremities,
We, under Garibaldi, made our course

For San Marino, in whose territory,
As a Republic yet inviolate,
He purposed to find refuge for all those
Whose strength and courage might not bear them on
Through new and unknown perils : while himself
Pushed on to Venice with such few as still
Might follow and be faithful. But the hearts
Of most had failed already, and their strength
Was yet at lower ebb ; all hope was lost ;
Nothing was left them, perishing among
The rocks and forests of the wilderness.
Not even hope of glory, nor the wild
Excitement of the battle, nor the gain
Of falling in fair field to leave a name
Our country should keep honoured. We had done
Our utmost, and had failed ; the rest had failed
Before us. But, myself, I did not care,
So long as life kept in me, what should come,
While still my place was at my master's side.
That was enough ; together we went on,
Sharing the peril and the pain alike,
To our destruction, knowing not what hour
Our fate should meet us ; and I thought at least,
We should not be divided in our death.

Arduous and nigh impassable we found
The way to San Marino ; unknown paths,
Dense forests, rushing torrents, deep ravines
And not alone the Austrians in our rear,

Descending from the Tuscan Apennines,
But pressing up on either side of us,
The armies from Romagna. All the night,
And all the day, we marched, but many fell
Dead on the way. At evening we arrived
At Macerata Feltria.
In what place
Soever we found shelter, joyfully
The people and the peasants succoured us,
And gave us of their best. And there as we
Rested, and in the shadow of the trees
Had Garibaldi laid Anita down,
Wrapt in his cloak, a woman came to us,
Tall, and of serious aspect and pale face,
And brought us in abundance bread and wine,
And served us with untired solicitude.
But she looked pityingly, with softened eyes,
Upon Anita—who lay wearily
With hollow cheeks, and moaning in her sleep—
And said to Garibaldi, 'General,
Let her not fall alive into their hands!'
But he smiled mournfully, and said, 'No fear!
I keep a dagger for her next my heart;
And a last pistol-charge.' And she went on,
'They are near, General! They are all around:
I know not if there be between us yet
An hour's march: as you see there the leaves
In the wood rustling, through them there may be
The white coats coming.' Garibaldi said,

'We have come here through many straits, and now,
God helping me, I shall yet give the slip
To General Gorzhowski—' here he paused ;
For at the name, her face grew quivering-white,
And the deep passion burst forth in her voice :
'Gorzhowski ! Can a Christian speak his name,
And not add to it every curse in hell ?
Do not we dwellers in Romagna know
Of him and his too well ? Look round, and see
The heaps of ashes where our homes have stood.
See, if you will, but do not think to hear,
For men and women utter not such things
As they have known in this unhappy land.—
Have you seen Monna Lucia as you passed,
She who looks down upon her empty arms
Rocked on her bosom, where a month ago
Her babe lay smiling as the Austrians broke
In, and demanded at the bayonet's point
Her husband who was hidden ? There is one
Close by, indoors, and her you will not see,
For never will she lift her head, nor speak,
Nor come out of the dark ; the loveliest girl
Of all our village, Angela, the one
With hair like Guido's saints, and once she smiled.
She was betrothed, it was her wedding-day
Two months ago,—why is she not a bride ?
That was the day Gorzhowski's troops were here.
What is the last news from Bologna ? ah !
Can I not tell you that ? Who knows so well ?

I can bring to you one for testimony,
My son, my child, a boy of twelve years old.
In the last rising of the city, he
Was in the streets, too young to carry arms ;
But he was captured with the tricolor
Held in his hand, when half the rest were slain.
What is Gorzhowski's mercy ? He was spared
His life, he said, by favour ; he came home
To me, his mother, from the Austrian rods,
And ah ! if I could show you, General ;—
(God save you, for you would have saved us too !)
I am a woman—woman's lips may fail
At such a telling—but this woman's hand,
God let it wither in the flames of hell,
If aught it fail for pity or for prayers,
When once it has the knife in the Austrian flesh.'

We struggled onwards without road or guide,
And next day we had well-nigh lost ourselves
In the deep woods ; and coming to a pass,
Found that the Austrians had already seized
The heights above ; and nearly were cut off.
But at the day's end, such as still were left
Had reached Pietra Rubbia ; and next day,
Through the same perils held on out of breath,
Until at last we set our feet upon
The rock of San Marino, and might rest.
And there the people welcomed us with joy,
As men who had been saved out of a wreck ;

(Only twelve hundred of us being left).

But the next day we hardly were awake,
Before a summons to the city came
From General Gorzhowski, which proclaimed
That the Republic, should it harbour us
Beyond the morrow, should be entered by
The Austrian armies marching from each side;
(Ten thousand men having already held
The passes leading from it, to close up
All way for our escape). And furthermore,
A messenger to Garibaldi came,
With these proposals for himself and us:
That all our arms should be laid down at once,
And pardon should be granted us; that we
Under safe-conduct should be guarded home;
And he himself, secure from further harm,
Have passage given him to America.

But Garibaldi tore the paper up;
And said, 'I make no terms for my own life
With him whose heel is down on Italy.
There is no answer. But I will not bring
Ruin and rapine on this peaceful town,
That gives us welcome worthy of her boast
Of freedom immemorial. But alas,
There are no rights left now to be maintained,
Nor any law of nations or of God;
And the thousands of the tramping feet may march

Straight on, and sparing not, for all is theirs.'

Then he assembled all of us: and said,
'Friends, we have done a great thing, reaching here,
And God has helped us; we are safe to-night;
Inviolate in this spot, which kings have spared
So long, but will not spare another day
If we remain in it. Now go your ways:—
And many of us shall not meet again;
For I go hence to-morrow with my sword;
Since Venice yet holds out, and we by sea
May reach her yet, though but by miracle.
But whoso willeth may lay down his arms,
And have safe-conduct from the Austrian hence;
And none of you henceforth is bound to me,—
Ye have done well,—now take your chance of life:
Yet some of you, I know, will leave me not.
Sleep in this hospitable town to-night,
For it may be the last night ye will have
For sleeping; take your rest, and eat and drink;
Speak among friends free words of kindliness;
Cast not by any sweet face; if ye can,
Sing and be merry; and to-morrow morn,
Let him who feels that he can easily
Lie down with death as if it were a bride,
And cares not now to live when all is lost,
Meet me again--and here: but let him know
He will not have to-morrow's choice come twice.
For whoso goeth forth of here with me

Will leave behind him his last chance of life.
Yea, every chance save one, that he may die
Free in Italian freedom, ere it dies,
The freedom that has only lived a year
And that is but a chance—a slender one.

And the next day, at the appointed hour
I, at the place appointed, found myself
One of three hundred, who were all that now
Remained with us. And so we took our leave
Of San Marino ; and set forth again
On a more desperate errand than before.

Nine hundred of our comrades stayed behind ;
Having consented to lay down their arms
Under a promise from Gorzhowski's hand
They should go free. But they did not gain much
By their surrender ; for upon the road
He stopped them, and divided them ; and half
He to the prisons sent of evil fame
Of Mantua ; and upon the rest bestowed
The bastinado, ninety strokes apiece.

And ere we passed from San Marino, we
Had seen the proclamation issued forth
To every town and hamlet of the land,
By General Gorzhowski, in these terms :
' Whoever shall from this time forth receive

The outlaw Garibaldi, or his wife,
Or his banditti, some three hundred men,
Or any of their number,—or shall give
Them shelter, or shall furnish them with food,
Or fire, or water, or shall succour them,
Or guide them, shall be counted one with them,
And share with them the penalty of death.
And death shall further be the penalty
For any one, who, knowing where they hide,
Shall not detain them and deliver them
Up to the military law at once.
And any place or village where they pass
Shall be included in the penalty,
If within space of twenty-four hours thence
They be not lodged within our hands. Take note
Of every stranger that shall come your way.
The diabolical, ferocious face
Of Garibaldi, no one can mistake ;
The woman, though disguised, may soon be known,
Being great with child, and close upon the hour ;
The men are armed as brigands, and are all
Well-nigh barefooted, and in rags by now.
And every one who gives a rebel up,
Alive or dead, but most of all alive,
Shall have reward : but he who has the luck
To capture Garibaldi, though he be
A rebel and an outlaw too, himself,
Shall have free pardon, and a fortune too,
Worthy of the Imperial treasury.'

Forward we went all day in gloom and dread
For Garibaldi's eyes had grown so dark,
And his mouth set so stern, I did not dare
To look upon him; and I felt the days
Were drawing to some terrible great close.
But still I had the comfort close at hand,
And the way was not dark to me; for still
I was with Ugo, both upon one march,
Who, free from any earthly bond or care,
In the red raiment of the battle-field,
Went onward ever in a glorious peace,
As though the bitterness of death were passed,
Or rather could not come to him. And I,
Looking on him whom I had loved so long,
Saw, standing in the sunset, as it were,
The angel of that Ugo who had stood
In the monk's habit side by side with me,
Serving the sick in the dark house at Rome.

And that night in the open we encamped,
To the sea-coast advancing. It was dark;
More than one fire we did not dare to light;
And near it Garibaldi and his wife,
And Ciceruacchio and his two sons sat,
With Ugo and some others, through the night.
But Ugo drew a poem from his breast,
Which he was writing: all the way from Rome
This work had come with him; and many times
When others were asleep, he sat and wrote;

And now, this night I watched him write again,
Fast, and with knitted brows, as though his heart
Were set to finish it. The book was called
'La Croce Vincitrice' (being a tale
Of those who first for Christ had died in Rome,
And how, at last subdued, an Emperor
Had laid his Empire at the Cross's foot).
I never saw the poem—and indeed,
I could not well have read it,—but I saw
The face of Ugo, when his feet were set
Upon the way of doom.
The wakeful eyes
Of Garibaldi strained into the dark;
And still he listened, and would take no rest.
And by the watchfire that night once he broke
The gloomy silence, saying: 'Friend, good-night!
What shall to-morrow bring us? Shall we reach
Venice together? Nay, I think it not.
For we have come to our last hope, and that
Is failing us, to die amongst our own.
What matters? What is left us now to do,
Since this year's Italy was but a dream,
And it is over, but to vanish too?
We could not save her,—should we save ourselves?
Nay, it were well for us if but our blood
Might drop into her furrows, and sink down,
And through the winter lie among the seeds,
And we be no more heard of evermore:
For I know surely that though we be dead,

Though all this generation pass away,
Out of this soil the flower shall spring at last,
Of the starry whiteness, and the crimson heart,
And the green leaves spreading—Yea, the Flower of the
World,
Poets have dreamed of—but upon our graves.'

And Ugo answered, with the flickering fire
Lighting the liquid eyes up underneath :
'Yea, Greatest, on our graves, but not on thine.
Thine eyes shall see it. They have got no look
Of yearning after a dream unfulfilled ;
But rather that magnetic joy which draws
Men to partake of it, saying, "We desire,
And falter, and come short ; lo, here is one
In whom the strength is one with the desire."
Though now thou comest to that straitest pass
Wherein availeth thee not strength, nor joy,
And thou must suffer, and not thou alone.
But thou shalt come forth from it, though thou leave
Thy heart's desire there, and thy bloom of life,
And God shall go with thee through the dark days
That are coming, that are come. And thou shalt stand,
Some day far hence, after long tale of years,
Alone, alone, but Garibaldi still,
In the face of all the world ; and at thy side,
Like a golden lily after the night's rain
Bursting its sheath in the sunrise, all uprisen,
Italy, Italy, with the eyes of fire !

Laying her hand in thine, and turned to thee,
And saying, "My Saviour! can I give thee nought?"
And then thy heart will turn back to this day,
This day of utter desolate despair,
When we were driven between the shore and sea,
And the hounds of all the Empire loose on us,—
And yet we were together; and the heart
Of thy child's mother lying close to thine:
And thou wilt say in the glory to thyself,
"Give me that day back—but it cannot be."
Yet fear not, Garibaldi, for thy heart
Is stronger than all grief, or death, or time.'

But then Anita sprang up passionately:—
'Have we to die so soon? I cannot die
Till I have seen my children once again!
They are across the mountains and the sea,
They are asking when their mother will come back.
How can a mother die, with her little ones
Calling her back to them and wanting her?
O Christ, Who wast born of Mary, hearken me
For Thy mother's sake, and pity me now at least!
O Mary, save me! Let me suffer pain,
Yea, any labour, any agony,
So I but living to my children come!
Let the way be as long and perilous
As ever any pilgrim had to tread,
Before his sins were loosened, and he sank
Dead on the last steps of Thy sanctuary.

If I have sinned, I have suffered! Have I not
Done expiation, even all these years?
Have I lain on beds of roses, or stood back
From the sweeping sword and shot, or turned aside
Because the stones were sharp and my feet were sore?
I did not count the cost, but I have paid.
Am I not too a woman, and my flesh
As soft and white as any Queen of all?
Have I not worn through, when the stoutest men
Dropped off from following? Did any think
My limbs were iron, though I made no moan?
O my love, my love, it is not I complain!
Thou hast repaid me; if I might but live
And suffer by thy side for evermore,
It were enough;—but keep me now alive!
Let not thine arms unloose me, till this strait
Be over, and I have my babes again.

'O Menotti, O my firstborn, thou hast not
Forgotten me! Thou standest at the gate,
And lookest down the road that I shall come.
I am coming, O sweet smiles that wait for me!
—O my little one, my nursling, what shall keep
My feet from finding thee across the world!
O warm in thy sleep, with thy crimson cheeks, and curls
Crushed in the pillow, and thy rosy feet
Soft and uncovered, till thy mother's hand
Wraps them up softly, wilt thou not awake,
And sit up smiling, and stretch out thy arms?

O my lamb with the golden fleece! let me have thy head
On my breast a minute,—stand with clinging feet
Upon my knees! It is the hour of night
When babes are frightened if they do not find
Their mother. Who is holding me away?
They cannot come to me, nor I to them!
They are crying for me in the night, O God!'

She sank down with a long and bitter cry;
She did not weep, her eyes were dry and wild.
But Garibaldi wrapped her in his arms,
And murmured tenderly; and laid his hand
Upon her forehead; and his other hand
Held both of hers; and so she lay awhile,
Quiet a little, shivering with long sighs.

The following day we came unto the sea
At Cesenatico; we overpowered
The hundred Austrians of the garrison,
And took possession of the place ourselves.
Then we were marched down to the beach, and there
We found a line of fishing-boats drawn up;
And Garibaldi ordered us to form
In companies of twenty-four apiece,
Apportioned to the boats, thirteen in all;
He keeping Ugo Bassi at his side.
—And then for the first time I saw and knew
That we should be divided; and my heart,
Struck with the sudden blow, sank down and died.

But when he saw me standing on the shore,
Among the others, ready to depart,
At the boat's side, Ugo came up to me,
And took my hand in his, and said to me,
'Farewell, Antonio;—for we part to-day,
And who can tell whether we meet again
Out of this peril that we pass unto?
And now I thank thee for this love of thine,
Which thou hast given me out of thy true heart,
And for thy faithful service, and thy prayers,
In which forget not to remember me
Still, as I thee. We both have need of prayers
This hour. And if a hard doom come to thee,
And cruel death or crueller life be thine,
Rejoice then to have suffered for God's sake,
And for our Italy's and for all men's.
It may be one of us shall perish now,
And one of us be left alive: and though
No more thou hear the voice nor feel the hand
Thou lovest, yet thou art not desolate;
I leave thee to a better Friend than I.
Love Him, and trust Him, follow Him with pains,
—Not easily—the grace is for the strife;
And whatsoever trial He may lay
Upon thee, trust Him through it, and give thanks;
And when thy heart is heavy think on Him,
And when thy need is greatest, call on Him.
Hold fast God's promise, and remember this—
Christ will not fail thee, though Fra Ugo may.'
Then we were parted—and the end was come.

VII.

August, 1849.

And this was how it ended :—on the third
Of August, Garibaldi steered his fleet
Of fishing-boats towards Venice ; and at first
The wind was favouring. In the boat I lay
Huddled, and helpless, and most miserable ;
And though the helm which Garibaldi held
Guided us all, and all the boats kept near
Together, yet I felt the waters heave
Between us, and I knew that over them
Hand might not reach to hand, nor eye to eye.
No, never more :—did I not feel it then,
Though yet we held the same course? So we passed
A day and night, and at the break of dawn,
The swift sun rising smote across the sea ;
And we, far off and opposite, beheld
A vision all of palaces, and faint
Turrets and belfries in a silvery light,
Rose-tinted ; on the bosom of the sea,
Low down upon the last horizon line
Of smooth-swept plains of liquid opal. Then
The officer on board gazed out, and said,

'It is the Queen of the Adriatic!' and
He hailed her, saying: 'Haven of our hopes!
Last Lamp of Italy, receive us now!
Let us but fall on thy heroic breast,
Not lost at sea, or hunted on the waste,
Or buried in a prison!' And as rose
The sun, the vision grew more clear and fair,
And we stretched out our hands and eyes to her.
But lo! another vision—and this time,
A dark and deadly one. What shapes are these,
These black hulls looming nearer into sight?—
The Austrian fleet is bearing down on us.

Already had we rounded past the cape
Punta di Maestra, when they appeared,
And opened fire upon us; and at once
The wind veered round, and beat against us too.
All round us cannon-smoke and thunder rolled,
And we, dismayed, thought our last hour had come.
But Garibaldi shouted all to keep
Together; and still sought to force a way;
And a fierce fight we held upon the sea.
But all was vain; the great ships came between
And scattered us; one of our boats was sunk,
And seven were captured; and the prisoners forced
Up the ships' sides, and cast into the holds,
And to the fortress-city, Pola, brought,
Loaded with chains, and there compelled to work
Among the galley-slaves as criminals.

And I among them. And if now it were
My history which I had to relate,
Not Ugo Bassi's, I might wring your hearts
With what we suffered there, our tale of wrongs
And cruelties, cut off from all the world.
For in those months that bordered on despair,
No comfort ever came to me but this,
The memory of the words that Ugo spake;
And, as he bade me, I remembering him
Prayed ever for some succour unto Christ.
But never answer came to me, except
My own tears bursting as before me rose
The vision of his face, when last on me
Bent the beloved eyes in their farewell.
Yet it may be those tears preserved my heart
From breaking; and at last a comfort stole
About my heart, thinking that death was near:
For we of Southern nurture do not hold
Our life deep-rooted, and could less endure
Than could the Lombards, and we wasted fast.
And many of our number out of Rome
Had died already, when an order came
To set us free; the statesmen having ruled
Our ransom. We were under guard conveyed
To the Sardinian frontier, and there left
Destitute, such of us as had survived.
And hearing there that Garibaldi lived,
And was at Genoa,—begging and on foot
Thither I made my way, in hopes to find

My master, or at least have news of him,—
And there at last I learnt what had befallen.

For Garibaldi with five boats escaped ;
And under cover of the darkness beat
All night about the coast, and at the dawn
Landed his company upon the beach,
Near Magnavacca. In the boat with him,
Besides Anita, and some others, were
Ugo, and Ciceruacchio with his sons,
And Count Livraghi of Bologna, who,
Wounded in that encounter on the seas,
Moved but in pain. The other boats contained
About a hundred. All these castaways
Now found themselves upon the enemy's shore,
Upon the sandy Vaccolino, in
The last of the great forest of the pines,
That stretches from Ravenna. Death behind,
And death before, still Garibaldi held
Northward, if so some miracle of God
Might bring them yet to Venice ; and all day
They travelled, traversing the boundless tracts
Of the Lagunes, or lost among the reeds
Of the inextricable labyrinths
Of the great river's mouths and shifting sands
Until at eventide they entered in
A forest, which the people of those parts
Call the Elysian Grove ; and there at last
Anita sank and could no further go,

Worsted for the first time, and evermore.

The shadow of her coming agony
Was over her, and of her heart's despair ;
Seeing it was not well for her to die,
As for all other women in this world,
For she was Garibaldi's wife, and had
Her heaven in this life ;—and the other side
Of the dark river she had come to cross,
Walked ever the pale ghost of him who died
Long years ago for her, and waved to her
With clutching hands, and hollow eager eyes,—
'I have waited long for thee, and thou art mine :
My time is come ;' and heavier ever came
Back the reproachful memory of those times,
Of love betrayed for love ; and that dead life
Laid a cold hand upon her heart ; while yet
Within her heart the impatient unborn life
Shuddered and heaved ;—and she was spent to death,
And clung to Garibaldi, and her eyes
Prayed 'Keep me ! Save me !' and he could not speak .
Together they had come to their despair,
No hope for him in life, or her in death.

Then Garibaldi knew all hope was gone,
And that his quest was over ;—and he said,
'This is the end for us. We will stay here,
My wife and I together, and abide
Our fate ;—and ye most faithful to the last,

Part from me here ; there is no more to do.
We shall not save our lives,—but we may pray
To meet once more before the throne of God,
And hear from Him that Italy is saved.'

Then they departed all their several ways
Whither their fate should lead them. But those seven
Whom I have named, a little longer kept
Together, seeking yet if they might find
Some shelter for Anita. And at last
They came upon a woodman's cottage, set
Amid the thickest forest of the pines
That reached between the river and the sea,—
And in it an old man, who said : 'I have
But little life to lose ;—if I may yield
You any aid, my last days are my best.'

By the low door they lingered, for to part
Was hard ; and Ugo said : 'Livraghi's wound
Needs rest ; no hope is there for him to cross
From here to Venice, and I cannot leave
Him helpless ;—he and I must take our fate,
As God shall send, together.' Then the sons
Of Ciceruacchio, and himself, embraced
Their leader ; and departed by themselves
Into the forest, and were seen no more.

Then Garibaldi, holding Ugo's hand :
'The night is coming ; it is time we two

Should be alone together. Is there more
To say, O my beloved? We must part.
God be with you, and us!' And Ugo said:
'O Friend, O Hero, who hast lifted me
Into a height and blossoming of life
I dreamt not of, and set me by thy side
At the world's heart, farewell! hear my last word.
The hope of Italy is on thy head;
Guard it, for God's sake! though each one of us
Fall, and our lives pass, yet let thine remain!
His work is done with us, but not with thee.
Dying is easy;—keep thou steadfastly
The greater part, to live and to endure.
For though we meet no more, and the fair days
Are over, and my time is near at hand,
I have this comfort of thee in my heart,
That God has yet got many things for thee
To do and suffer for our Italy,
And greater things than any heretofore.'

Then they wrung hands, and parted; and he turned
To where Anita, seated on the ground,
On the smooth carpet of the fir points fallen,
Gazed with beseeching eyes for some last drop
Of comfort in her anguish; and as now
He saw her passing thus from life and love
Away together in the gathering gloom,
This parting was too cruel; and for once
The utter pity overpowered the peace;

And as he took her hand and looked at her,
The face that to so many dying eyes
Had lighted up the gathering of the dark
With eyes that smiled above their mortal pain,
Now quivered, and his voice broke down, and he
Suddenly turned, and hurriedly away
He passed, he and Livraghi, and were lost
To sight, amid the shadowy forest trees.

Two days from this, the setting sun lit up
The Villa Spada, on the heights above
Bologna, the head-quarters of the Staff
Where General Gorzhowski, Governor,
Sat with his Council in a close debate
What other stringent measures they might take
To capture Garibaldi, since till then,
In spite of proclamations and rewards,
And troops on every side, and Carabineers,
He was not taken; nor indeed had he
Since he had sailed from Cesenatico
Been heard of. General Gorzhowski was
Certainly not beloved in any part
Of the Romagna, over which he ruled;
Least of all in Bologna, which had long
Held out against him, and in which his name
Was spoken but with curses. Yet he was,
Though far from handsome, a distinguished man,
Polite too, I have heard, an ornament
Of drawing-rooms, and took the hand of queens

In dancing, and though choleric at times,
Still a good ruler for a state of siege.

To him, thus sitting, was brought in the news
That now two men, stragglers and fugitives
From Garibaldi's legion, had been brought
In, prisoners, to head-quarters; and at once
He gave command that they should be conveyed
Before him. Then into the council-room
Were Ugo Bassi and Livraghi brought,
Loaded with chains. And upon seeing them,
Gorzhowski, who with rapid utterance spoke,
And sometimes choked with passion, poured his wrath
And disappointment forth on them, and with
Unmeasured words reviled them; and went on:
'So you are caught at last! You are the first,
But will not be the last;—but you shall have
The privilege of serving to the rest
For an example. Every one of you
Already is condemned. You will be shot
To-morrow morning;—and you need not hope
For mercy, unless one of you indeed
Had the good luck to know the whereabouts
Of the vile Bandit whom you call your Chief.
That, has been set forth under seal of ours,
Should save the veriest scoundrel of you all
His punishment. But beggars such as you
Are not so likely to be favoured with
His counsels, or to know the way he took.'

And Ugo answered calmly, 'Yes, we know.'

Like one who digs for iron and strikes *gold*,
Gorzhowski started ;—but recovering,
Burst forth in thunder, 'Dare you jest with me?
Do you think insolent lies will save your life?
You have made up some tale to pass on me:
It will be worse for you than you think yet,
Unless you prove your words, and that at once.

The adjutant who had escorted them
Came forward, saying, 'Sir, they speak the truth.
Two days ago was Garibaldi seen
Near Magnavacca, and these men with him.
But every trace of him has since been lost,
And these were taken yesterday, alone,
Sleeping within a tavern stable-loft
Close to Comacchio.' Then Gorzhowski said,
'If this be so, you yet shall have a chance,
The only chance any of you can have,
And that is, a reprieve, until I find
Whether you really know what you profess.
The Son of Satan last was seen with you,
And you shall show me where to find him now
I stand no lying, and the sooner caught,
The better it will be for both of you.
I give you but two days of grace in all,
And if he be not here within the time,
No crying back will save you afterwards.'

Thus spake Gorzhowski, fuming, full of rage,
And hardly looking at them all the time;
While Ugo stood in silence until he
Paused :—and the overworn and sleepless eyes
Dreamed back one moment to the forest-gloom,
And the farewells beneath the slumbrous pines;
And the lips parted as to some sweet air
Peacefully, lost in visions far away;
One moment only,—then the voice was firm
And recollected, and thrilled all the room :
'God guard him safe from you! God shelter him!
Neither for life, nor death, nor any boon,
Nor any penalty that you can give,
Will we give tidings of him.' Pale and mute
The Council sat astonished, but the Chief,
Struck dumb with sudden impotence of rage,
Gasped chokingly in a bewildered blank
Of silence,—and at last looked up and knew
The stately figure and the noble face
That, travel-soiled, and buffeted, and faint
From fastings, and from wanderings, and from storms,
Before him stood with clear confronting eyes,
Glorious and grave, knowing the hour was come,
And now must God be glorified :—and he,
Stung by intolerance of a voice like this,
Burst in redoubled fury, 'Who are you
That dare to answer me with insolence?
I will have no more words! You think perhaps
An Austrian barrack is a brigand's camp,

Where one makes speeches to the officers,
And bargains for the terms that one will take.
The Council is dismissed :—send out the Posts,
And fetch the guard ;—and you shall know at once
Whether I mean to be obeyed or no ;
For words were wasted on two mules like you.

What followed I can not relate in full,
Because there were no friendly witnesses ;
If there had been, my heart would bleed so fast
At every word, I would not though I could.
For Christ can bear to look upon such things,
Having Himself endured the same for us ;
And martyrs can themselves endure the same
When their time comes, they having grace of God ;
But for us common flesh and blood, these deeds
Are only terrible, and ill to speak.

For then the Austrian (may the fiery claws
Of devils tear his soul in hell for it !)
Commanded them to seize, and bind, and scourge
Fra Ugo and Livraghi in his sight,
And show no mercy till they answered him .
And to that chamber only entered in
Gorzhowski and his executioners.
And all night long he had his way, and worked
His worst upon them, yet had not his will.
For morning came, as it will come at last
To every sleepless night ; and all night long

Hussars had scoured the country far and wide
Like hounds,—and Garibaldi was not found,
Nor tidings heard of him,—and not one word
Of his betrayal yet had crossed the lips
Of those two prisoners punished ; and both lay
At point of death, and none could hurt them more

And now Gorzhowski, more infuriate still,
Seeing that time was lost and nothing gained,
Gave orders to his adjutant, at once
To have the execution carried out
In the court-yard below,—with yet a hope
That at the sudden supreme touch of all,
The shock of the fresh air, the deadly files,
The pointing muzzles close against their eyes,
They in their weakness might be startled once
Into a momentary failing, which
Should lay the slender secret in his hands,
By which hung all the hope of Italy,
Which in each moment of delay he felt
Slipping away from him. But doubtfully
The adjutant replied, 'Sir, one of them
Being a monk, the military power
Has not authority to punish him
Without the sanction of the Church ; since we
Are here upon the footing of allies
Of the Pontifical Supremacy.'

On which Gorzhowski answered, with an oath :

'It is too late for that! But anyhow
The Holy Church shall give consent to it,
Before he dies. Pray, sir, do you suppose
They will presume to question anything
I choose to order? I have taught them all
How I am to be treated. I am here
Civil and Military Governor,
The sole and sovereign representative
Of his Imperial Majesty. These priests
Have me to thank that they are back at all.
I brought them here, I keep them here; and I
Intend that they shall know their proper place.
This Cardinal Bedini gives himself,
Being the Legate of the Pope, the airs
Of Governor, and turns and twists to find
Some way to circumvent me, and to get
The upper hand. Do you remember, sir,
What happened when we first reduced the place
To order, and the Legate was restored?
As nobody appeared inclined to thank
The Lord for sending us, we piously
Thanked Him ourselves. We had a grand *Te Deum.*
There was a state procession, and the rest:
And then I found that it had been arranged
By Monsignor Bedini, that himself
Should take the lead, as the most eminent
Personage present. But I interposed,
Saying, "You understand me, Cardinal:—
I in Bologna am the First, and I,

On this occasion and all future ones,
Shall take my place accordingly." And he
In his most bland and condescending way
Said, "Certainly:—as our distinguished guest,
All honour shall be paid His Excellency."
But I returned as promptly: "Not at all—
You quite mistake me,—I am neither guest
Nor friend of yours,—but I am Master here;
And I go first;"—and so His Eminence,
After much cogitating, found in vain,
Was forced to walk behind.—His smile was sweet.
Since that submission I keep terms with him.
And he shall now give up his priest to me,
In his own writing. Take this note to him,
And bring me back his answer, and be quick!'

And while the messenger was on his way,
He ordered all to be in readiness
For the two prisoners to be put to death.
So the guard took them forth, and set them down
Beside a pillar in the common hall,
The soldiers coming and going through the doors.
And they, being spent with torture, lifted not
Their heads again, nor uttered any word;
And no one dared to succour them, or bring
A cup of water to them.

The slow time
Wore on, and still Gorzhowski chafed and chafed

At the delay.—And at this time, it were
As well to note down certain passages
Which had occurred a little while before,
And had some bearing upon Ugo's fate.

For, as it happened, two days previously,
Here in Bologna, in the 'Week's Gazette,'[1]
Cardinal Oppizzoni, now restored,—
(A very holy, charitable man,
Whose virtue counterbalanced to the Church
The far-from-edifying private life
Of Monsignor Bedini),—had put forth
This much-admired archiepiscopal
Effusion,—which is here subjoined entire :—
'Amidst the tribulations, and the floods
Of turbulence, that, in the year elapsed,
Afflicted these unhappy Provinces,
The horror of whose memory still is fresh
In the imagination,—one great grief
Pierced to the very bottom of our heart,
(Second alone to that unspeakable
Anguish with which we listened to, and saw
The sacrilegiously-committed crimes
Against God and His Vicar) ;—and that one
Was this, the cruel silence laid on us
By a severe and sad necessity.
Since above all things we desired the power
As Pastor and as parent to uplift

[1] See note B.

Our voice in speech, that we might roll away
Each stone of scandal and perdition hence ;
As also to let loose the simple ones
Out of the snares spread forth by certain men,
—Such men as that are very few, thank God !—
But all the more audacious in their acts
Of evil,—only too conspicuous by
Ecclesiastical habiliments,
And under obligation to a vow
Monastic,—violating every law,
Contaminating consciences with free
And frantic declamations, publicly
Maintaining theories ridiculous,
As that the supreme power of government
Is a precarious gift, and held in trust
By rulers for the population,—thus
Exciting general disparagement
Of all dominion, and, as says Saint Jude,
Blaspheming every majesty, (the text,—
"Despise dominion, and speak evil of
Dignities") ; and moreover setting light
By the most sacred, venerable rites
And doctrines of religion ; treating them
As superstitions and of no account ;
—With manners at the least equivocal,
And impudently taking on themselves
To mend the Church's morals. Certainly
It was not any fear of private harm,
Nor any peril threatening our own life,

(Already at its term) which held us back
From speaking, or which caused us to retire;
(For well we know that the good Shepherd should
Devote himself a holocaust to save
The flock committed to his care); and you
Surely remember that we solemnly
Protested against all these infamies,
And that our exhortation was received
With impudent derision. We were bound
By two considerations,—on one hand,
Mindful of that admonitory text
Fitting the times (Ecclesiasticus,
The twentieth chapter and the seventh verse)
Sapiens tacebit usque ad tempus,—then
Upon the other hand too well aware
What prudence and what circumspection were
Required of us in such a crisis,—nay
Enjoined upon us by His Holiness
The Supreme Pontiff, (until He Himself
By scandalous audacity was driven
An exile from the Apostolic See),
And that the urgent and reiterated
Appeals to duty met with no response
From those who should have been the first to give
Effect to them,—nothing remained for us
But to stand far off, and weep bitter tears
Between the porch and the altar,—comforted
Only, by thinking that we might exclaim
With great Tertullian, Father of the Church,

(In *Apologia*, chapter thirty-eight),
—*Nihil est Nobis cum insania circi.*
But now that God once more has poured on us
The treasures of his mercy infinite,
And has replaced us in the plenitude
And exercise of our episcopal
Functions and ministry,—once more we say,
Sapiens tacebit usque ad tempus. Now
The time *has* come, and we shall duly speak.

'And now, O most beloved sons, do we
Address these words to you, but not as though
They were required to reconduct your feet
Into the paths of rectitude and truth,
—For most of you have never strayed away,—
But to encourage you to follow on
Strong and magnanimous :—*Estote*, says
The Scripture to us, speaking of these days,
Fortes in bello. Truly it becomes
Us all to trample with heroic scorn
The fatal records of that impious war
The powers of darkness waged against your souls ;—
Satan himself transformed into a false
Similitude,—an angel as it were
Of light,—an aspect full of joy and peace,
And full of lying promises to you
Of treacherous felicity. Not here
Will we repeat, O cherished sons of ours,
The florid blasphemies with which the Name

Most Holy of the Crucified was made
To serve as watchword to incite revolt
Against a Pontiff ever venerable.
Did they not even dare to represent
The holy Sacrament of Penitence
As in the hands of priests an instrument
Of fraud and of conspiracy?—were not
The blackest calumnies sown broadcast by
These ministers of Belial?—did they not
Openly publish doctrines tending to
Error, and even heresy, and schism?
Did they not crucify afresh the Son
Of God, and put Him to an open shame?
And, under cover of a warfare waged
Against hypocrisy and retrograde
Movement, stir up the fires of civil rage,
And seek to fling among our Clergy here
(Pacific, exemplary every way),
And among the misguided mob, the seeds
Of horrible and most pestiferous
Divisions?

'Now, Beloved, cast away
Far from you, and forget the very sound
Of horrid words like these, whose blasphemies
Offended even the least pious ears;
Or recollect them only just so far
As to bring back a salutary thrill
Of pleasing horror, as if, saved yourselves,
You heard foul maledictions far away,
Or crying out of the Infernal Pit.

'Nor should the fine conceits of patriotism—
By which was sought to smooth the enormity
Of these excesses, and to lure away
The simple in a snare, and to inflame
The multitudes,—awaken, O Beloved,
Any hallucination in your minds.
Beware lest any man spoil you, Saint Paul
Says, *through philosophy and vain deceit,*
After traditions, not of Christ but men.
(The Second of Colossians, and eighth verse).
The love of Country is a holy thing,
When in the first place, one accords to God
The love and honour that we owe to Him;
And when we duly have observed His laws,
Which are all charity, and which are placed
Within the sacred custody alone
Of His Most Holy Vicar, Pope of Rome,
And of His Bishops;—but these holy things
Are not to be dragged sacrilegiously
Through taverns, market-places, public haunts,
With impious and profane apostasy,
Insulting to Saint Peter and the Church.
These laws command the rich to help the poor
And to give alms; and also they command
The poor, by their hard labour to relieve
Their own distresses, or at least to bear
The allotted burdens without discontent.
But, O Eternal God! what have we heard!
What doctrines desolating, tending to

Destruction of all order, and all bonds
Civil and social, dinned into our ears
By truculent conspirators! Instead
Of the mild precepts of the Gospel lore,
Compelled to listen to the blandishments
And wiles, addressed to baser passions, roused
And flattered, and excited to a pitch
Of wickedness, which (if it had not been
For God, and for the intercessory
Grace and beneficence of His Divine
Mother) was such that never has the world
In all its days, perhaps, beheld the like.
With every ancient barrier broken down
Of morals, decency, religion, Man
Would speedily degenerate to the state
Of brutes and savages;—with furthermore
This most unprecedented perfidy,
That the infuriated demagogues
Of this Peninsula, our native land
So fair and so unhappy,—waging war
On all authority and all the rights
Of property, themselves were all the time
Rapacious and unscrupulous to seize
On all the public and the private funds,
And arrogated to themselves a rule
Of savage and unheard-of tyranny.

'No more of them, Beloved! nor of those
Who would have propped up such a state of things

By sophistries, by snares, by violent speech.
Let us look to ourselves, and let us be
Sober and vigilant ;—let us beware
Lest in our own minds should intrude some taint
Of this absurd and pestilent scepticism,
Which is the death of every principle,
Which snaps each curb, and leaves the mind a prey
To every breath of chance, and hurls the soul
Downwards from depth to depth of the abyss,
Till it sends up at last the awful cry
There is no God. Never let us depart
From that philosophy of Gospel truth
Alone infallible :—and let us be
True and good Catholics, then shall we be
True and good citizens ; let us fulfil
With a clear conscience every duty here
Belonging to our station ; let us love
Our country with a reasonable love ;
Let us be zealous after all good works :
—So shall we rise to all desirable
Felicity ; and let us vanquish all
Ill-regulated passions,—then shall we
Have vanquished our most fierce and impious foes.

For all these blessings, O Beloved, we pray
To God for you, and with all ferventness,
Our pastoral benediction we confer
Upon you, from the fulness of our heart.

'Delivered from our archiepiscopal
Palace, Bologna, under our own hand,
The Third of August, Eighteen Forty Nine.
(Signed) Carlo Oppizzoni, Cardinal.'

No one pretended not to recognise
Who was the special sinner pointed out
Therefore it was a clear coincidence
Of Providence, when now the news was brought
In private, to the Palace, just at dusk,
That Ugo Bassi, the man's very self,
Was taken, and alive, and in the hands
Of General Gorzhowski,—news indeed
Almost too good to be believed by some :—
But the Archbishop piously exclaimed,
'Nunc Dimittis ! We have him safe at last.

And in the Legate's Palace, instantly
A secret council was convened,—nine priests
Belonging to Bologna, and three more
Of Hungary ;—and what was done and said
Is not exactly known ;—but this is sure,
(Since the betrayer often is betrayed)
It was agreed that Ugo Bassi's death
Would be a pleasing and religious act,
And that the law ecclesiastical
Should not be put in force to interfere.
And all the nine priests of Bologna signed
A secret document to this effect ;

(I know their names,—I will not write them down
Here on this page that bears the name of him).
But the three priests of Hungary refused
To put their hands to it; and they were seen
To pass out weeping.
Also be it known,
That the Archbishop took no part in these
Proceedings, neither gave consent, nor yet
Came forward with a protest; spoke no word
To save him or destroy him; but stayed still,
And waited patiently to see the end.

Now, to Gorzhowski's summons in due time
Arrived the answer of the Cardinal:
'Accept, your Excellency, our best thanks
For your most courteous and most gracious note
Received, concerning the seditious monk
Called Ugo Bassi. In the Church's name,
Of Which unworthy representative
I here abide, I gratefully express
My satisfaction at delivering him
Without conditions over to the arm
Of military jurisdiction.—More,—
Under great obligation we shall feel
If you will only take upon yourself
The punishment which at our hands is due
To him. Not only has he joined himself
With Garibaldi, when he lately raised
Open revolt against the Papal See,

And is *de facto* excommunicate ;—
But has been long obnoxious to us here,
As a disturber and a heretic,
And of the most pernicious sort of all,
—Being not of those who merely vex the brains
Of common people by their arguments,—
But one of those who win their hearts, by show
Of sympathy, and words they understand,
And succour to their bodies in distress,
With a severe simplicity of life ;
—In a malicious contradiction set
For the sound doctrine that would save their souls,
With fatherly indulgence for their sins.
Had it not been for the perplexities
And troubles of the Church in these last years,
He would not have been left at large so long.
The Prior of his convent was a fool,
And knows it now,—he has had that to learn
Unpleasantly, since order was restored,
In a safe corner of Saint Angelo,—
And so encouraged him,—he was a fool
And nothing worse,—but this notorious man,
With his smooth face, and his officiousness,
And help among the poor, and talk of Christ,
Has been a thorn and scandal to the Church
This long time past,—and in particular
Being born in it, this diocese of mine
He has infested like a croaking frog
When one would sleep at night, and been to me

A perfect Plague of Egypt. I am glad
You have him now ; and for his punishment
We owe you many favours ;—and be sure
The Church will ask no reckoning at your hands
For any blood of his ;—do what you will.
The sooner done the better ;—but take care
It be done quietly these dangerous times.
For in Bologna is his very name
A watchword, and the very stones would rise
To rescue, if they guessed at harm to him.
And as you know, though not so well as I,
(Who, meeting only with ingratitude,
Have laboured long among them for their good,)
The people of this city are perverse,
And deadly, not to be dealt lightly with,—
The most stiff-necked, indomitable race
In Italy. But I have trust this time,
That with God's blessing all will yet go well,
And peaceably ;—and most sincerely hope
No interruption nor unpleasantness
Is likely to occur, to interfere
With your most gracious visit promised me
This evening ;—which I have looked forward to
With liveliest emotions of delight
Anticipated, and have spared no pains
To make my poor and unpretending house
Worthy the honour you confer on it.
My chief has promised to surpass himself
In beccaficos, which your Excellency

Was pleased to praise last time; and I myself
Make it my own peculiar care to see
That the Lachryma Christi perfectly
Be in condition to ensure from you
A generous commendation. I may say,
Between ourselves, that that French company
Which you remember, which you said yourself
Was the best entertainment you have seen,
Have promised their most choice performances
At my particular and private place
Of residence (Saint Michael's Bower, outside
The gates, by the Certosa), where we two
Can retire later, and amuse ourselves,
And no one be the wiser. I remain
Your Excellency's humblest servant, and
Devoted friend, Bedini, Cardinal.'

Having impatiently glanced over this,
Gorzhowski growled,—'What do I care for all
His quarrels? Heretic or orthodox,
It is all one to me. Italian priests
Are one as good as another.—Of the two,
This stubborn fellow who hates me as well
As I hate him, each for our country's sake,
Is worth as much as this devoted friend,
Who would put poison in my wine to-night,
If he but dared. Why should I be the cloak
For his hypocrisy, and steal away
For his amusements? I am not ashamed;

I have no character for holiness
To keep or lose ;—and if I choose to have
His players practise in the public streets,
It shall be done. But I am glad to learn
That the good people of Bologna make
So great a favourite of this monk of theirs.
I have a grudge to pay them ; they shall have
The pleasure now of seeing how I serve
Such holy friars. But there shall be no time
For brewing mischief.'
On the instant then,
He ordered out ten thousand infantry
To take possession of the gates and streets,
And keep the way ; and that the prisoners should
Be carried through the city to the place
Of execution, and all ignominy,
As felons and assassins, laid on them.

First, through the gates the Artillery rolled out,
And passing through the Porta Mamolo,
Along the streets heavily clangouring,
Was stationed in the corners of the squares,
The cannon pointing down the crowded lines ;
And then, along the middle of the streets,
The cavalry began to clear a way,
And took up their position, waiting there.
And on the hum and business of the town
An awful noontide stillness seemed to fall :
And all the dwellers from the arcades and courts

Began to gather on the line of march,
Uncertain what should happen, but prepared
For something evil, and expecting it.
For nothing was so dreadful in those days,
Or sad, or wonderful, as to seem strange;
And every day brought some new tragedy.
The best walked gravely, knowing that themselves
Might be the next called out to play their part;
And the most idle lived in doubt and dread.

Meanwhile, up in the Villa Spada, spoke
Gorzhowski :—'One last chance I give you now;
Pardon, or death :—make haste ;—your hour has come
And Ugo Bassi answered, 'We have chosen.
But grant to us, since we are dying this hour,
And this world's strifes are over, one last boon,
For love of Christ who died for thee and me.
As we forgive thee, so forgive thou us,
That we have thwarted thee and made thee sin :
And let us have the sacraments of death
Brought to us :—that my friend, and I, and thou
May eat together, and then part in peace.'

The Austrian answered, 'What an impudent
Proposal! You and I in peace, indeed!
You think to cheat me so to save your soul.
Obstinate as you are, you shall not have
Mercy from me for that. Do you not know
The Cardinal-Legate has himself declared

The Church has cast you out, and that you are
A heretic and excommunicate?
Live,—on my terms,—but there is left you now
Only a few more moments :—there shall be
Neither *viaticum* nor shrift for you.
And as my rods have ploughed your flesh, my balls
Shall crush your bones and batter out your brains.
And leave your bodies to the kites and crows,
And send your soul to hell;—and once got there,
The Devil is more than match for you or me!'
Then Ugo faintly smiled, and turned himself
Towards Livraghi, and reached hands to him;
And said, 'My brother, we shall drink no more,
Of the fruit of the vine, until we drink it new'—
The voice failed, and the parched lips uttered not.

Then were the prisoners manacled with cords,
Placed in a cart, and carried from the doors
Of Villa Spada downwards to the town,
Between the squadrons of the cavalry;
The muffled drums beating a funeral march
Before them;—and beside, Gorzhowski rode,
In wait for his last opportunity.
So they moved on, and traversing the town,
Went down one long street, and another one,
Strada Isaia, towards the further gate;
And Ugo Bassi's face, without the smile,
With the faint lips, and brows of agony,
Passed through the city; and the murmurs grew,—

'Not Garibaldi—no—but those who last
Were seen with him,'—and still the rumours grew ;—
Until at last a cry rose suddenly
Along the streets,—'It is himself ! our friend ;
Our townsman, Ugo Bassi ! '—and at once
The fiery quickness of the Romagnole
Darted upon the truth, and they knew all.
And when they saw the beautiful pure face,
Faithful unto the last for Italy,
Carried between them, with its sacred seal
Of silence through its last extremity,
Without an answer to the yearning eyes
Now, any more than to the cruel hands,—
The passion of the people broke aloud
Hopeless, and helpless :—they had got no arms,
(Gorzhowski searched the town two months before,
And carried forty thousand muskets off
To Mantua) ; and they had got no time,—
Women and children, a defenceless crowd ;
But casting off all fear and all restraint,
Sobbings and imprecations filled the air,
Wild cries for vengeance rising over them ;
Until beneath the shrill and raving storm,
At last Gorzhowski shivered as he rode,—
Hell-fire of hisses raking him all down
The long streets opening into longer ones,
Lined with the curses broken loose at last ;
Not one, not a thousand, but the whole great town,
Men, mothers, babes, a countless multitude,—

More terrible because the trampled hands
Had never a helper left them now but God.
Struck into silence, he rode pale and foiled,
And desperate in his impotent revenge.—

But though the people gathered up, and streamed
Behind the cavalcade, it passed along
More quickly, and was out of reach, before
They well knew what it was had come to them.

About a mile outside the city-gate,
Porta Isaia, lies the felon's field;
And close beside it lies the Cemetery,
Certosa, to the westward of the walls;
The Mount of Guard above it, with its church
And portico to give the pilgrims' feet
Safe-conduct to our Lady of Saint Luke,
Stands for a landmark many miles away.
Bologna knows it well;—there is no child
Born in Bologna but shall know the place.
And there they halted, past the wailing throngs;
And there they formed a square of infantry;
And then there was a silence, very short;
And then three volleys rang out, one by one,
Through the still, sultry air. Bologna heard,
And knew that all was over.

After that,
Gorzhowski cleared the streets, and suffered none
To show themselves abroad again that day.

They dug a grave, and threw the bodies in,
Just where they fell, and hardly covered them.
But the next morn, as if by miracle,
The cruel mound had blossomed into wreaths,—
Clusters of summer-snowing stars in heaps
On glossy trailing leaves, and roses red
As any Dorothea sent her friend.
And night by night the grave lay fresh in flowers,
In spite of all the Austrian arms could do.

But who shall utter of that day's despair,
Through all Bologna, as the hours went on?
The cry rose up from all the populace;
'He saved others from the perishing:
Himself he did not save!'

Yea, didst not save
Thyself, O Ugo Bassi, from the cross
Of pain, and death, and man's last cruelty!
But God did save thee, and did shelter thee
From all dishonour and from all despair,
From any falling off of faith in Him,
Or hope in man: and gave thee thy desire,
To die as thou hadst lived, for love of love.

What of the others, who that mournful day
Landed with Garibaldi? Nothing more
Than this is known of most of them, that they
Were never seen again. The river-wastes

Engulfed them ; they were hunted on the hills,
Starved in the forests, slain by bloody hands,
Killed by wild beasts, devoured, or left to lie
Unburied ; they were scattered in the wilds ;
They perished :—will not God remember them ?

And in those same days perished Angelo
Brunetti, and his two sons, cruelly
Slain by the Austrians ;—tortured, as some say,
And after, murdered ;—but I have met none
Who knew the very manner of their deaths.
Thou, Angelo the Roman, didst not miss
The palm of angels ;—but they say in Rome,
Down the Ripetta, where he dwelt before,
Ciceruacchio is not really dead,
But only lost :—in prison, it may be,
The more the pity,—but he will come back.
He did not say good-bye to them, his house
Is standing ready for him, and they come
Morning and evening there to look, and ask,
If in meantime he has arrived at home.
And when the floods rise, and the poor are driven
Out of their homes to gather shelterless,
Or in the winter when the meal is scarce,
They ask each other, Will Madonna send
Ciceruacchio back to us to-day ?
And never have they given up hope of him.
But Garibaldi knows that he is dead,
And told me so. . . . .

And on the eighth of August, the same day
And the same hour that Ugo Bassi died,
Anita died in childbirth, in the arms
Of Garibaldi, and her child with her.
And Garibaldi dug a grave himself,
And buried them, alone, within the depths
Of the pine-forest, near the murmuring sea.

Then Garibaldi, broken-hearted, passed
Across the rivers, and the forests, to
Ravenna :—and this marvel came to pass,—
That in those dreadful darkest days of all,
He, with the face that no man could mistake,
With a king's ransom set upon his head,
His own life forfeit, and each other life
Of whom should harbour him but for an hour,
Outlawed, and banned, and excommunicate,
With the whole forces of the Empire set
Upon each byway and each house for him,
Careless of life himself, and broken down,—
Did single-handed and unharmed pass through
The utter breadth of Italy ; and passed
Again across the mountains by the way
Of Tuscany ; and into Genoa
Entered at last, a solitary man,
The only one of all that company
That had survived ;—and there his countrymen
Received and welcomed him with one accord.
But no one ever saw him smile again.

But at the time I came to Genoa,
The King of Piedmont's Government, hemmed round
By Powers that hated Freedom and the Name
Of Italy, dared harbour him no more.
So they commanded him and all of his
Out of their coasts and cities to depart.
Then, seeing that my native land no more
Would yield me any spot of hers whereon
I might have shelter, I, enforced to flee,
Sought Garibaldi for a counsellor.
And he directed me to find my way
To England, where he said I should be safe,
The only refuge left inviolate.
And he set me on board an English ship;—
But sailed himself out to America.

So I to London came, and have dwelt there
All the days since, the dark and doleful days.
And I have seen Mazzini since I came;
But he is changed, and grey, only the eyes
Are glorious like the eyes that lighted Rome.
But little can he do to succour me,
And little can I do to help myself.
Here live I in a land that never knew
How fair the smiling of the sun can be;—
Alone,—in squalid poverty and rags,
Amid the roaring of the dismal streets,
And fog, and dripping rain, and cold at nights
And have but one hope left to live upon,—

That death will take me soon, and I shall see
Ugo once more.
(And here I will note down
Some things I have heard since at various times,
Concerning those who brought about his death.)
A few weeks after, Venice, too, had fallen,
And the last spark was trodden out, beneath
The iron heel of Austria, on our soil.
And then, for his distinguished services,
And signal merits, and heroic zeal,
Was General Gorzhowski lifted to
The place of honour over all his peers;
And formally appointed to the post
He had been proved so worthy to adorn,
As Governor of Venice. His reward
And added dignity sit well on him,
—Beloved as much as ever. Venice now
Lies very quiet underneath his hand,—
As a Queen violated lives with him
That slew her lord. Eyes cannot kill, he thinks.
If he be happy, let him be, while yet
He may,—the end is not yet come for him.

Cardinal Oppizzoni gives God thanks
That he has lived so long, and outlived all
His enemies, and seen the Church prevail;
And unmolested in his dignities,
Remains as well as ever,—taking care
To run no further risks of any sort,

By anything approaching to a life
Of action. It is good, no doubt, to live;
Especially when one is not quite sure
What may come after death.
That other one,
Bedini, has a look within his eyes
As if the wolves were after him;—and he,
For all his silk, and down, and costly wines,
And the fair chambers at Saint Michael's Bower,
Sleeps ill at nights they say, and frightens those
Who watch beside him.
But thou sleepest well,
Ugo, my Ugo!
No one dares to speak,
There openly, but there is a report,
That on the day of Ugo Bassi's death,
Two officers at the head-quarters there
Were broken of their rank, and sent disgraced
To Mantua. Because, as it is said,
The one who should have given the word to fire
Would not, or could not do it; and the next
In turn refused; and they had need to find
A third. He was promoted speedily.

Also when the authorities perceived
That Ugo Bassi's grave became a shrine
Of pilgrimage, where thousands day by day
Came weeping, and in mourning, carrying wreaths;
And likewise that they tried to bear away

His body to some place of sepulture
Where no one should disturb them in their tears,—
It was resolved to stop disturbances
By being beforehand with them. And one night
The bodies secretly were disinterred,
And buried in a place which no one knew,
In the Certosa. Various rumours rose,
But none were certain; till a letter fell
Into some hands it was not meant for, from
The Cardinal Bedini to the Pope,
With pious satisfaction telling him
How things had been arranged, and adding that
The thing had been effected with all care
And circumspection; and that it was thought
By most, that Ugo Bassi's friends themselves
Had come by night, and stolen him away;
Which for the moment pacified their minds;
And soon, he hoped, the subject might be dropped.

The same illustrious prelate, at the time
Of Ugo's execution and his friend's,
Wrote formally to notify the same
To the Commission of the Roman States,
Taking occasion to declare as well,
That neither he, nor the Most Eminent
Archbishop had had intimation given
Them previously of the deplorable
Occurrence.
Also I have heard it said

That, underneath his garment, on his heart,
They found the poem I had seen him write,
Unfinished, pierced with balls, and soaked with blood;
And some one took it, and delivered it
Secretly to his friends for payment given;
And that they keep it hidden. But these things
Who knoweth? There is silence of the grave
Throughout the length and breadth of Italy.

. . . . . .

Yea, and I too have come unto my doom
For thy sake, Italy, and most for thine,
My master, who didst open me the way.
I, only following by a glorious face,
Found that it led through waters and through fires,
Through wildernesses, to the dark—the dark;
Who might have now been lying in the thyme
Unvexed by any trouble of the world,
Upon the sweetest of the Southern hills.
I left them:—nothing now remains to me
But this, that I was once a son of thine,
O Italy, the land where Ugo lies.
Remember when thou countest up thy lost,
That I was one of them! Nay, Italy,
Shouldst thou remember? Have I not been told
That Italy is dead, is dead, at last?
She has not breathed, or stirred since Ugo died.
He was the last whose blood was shed for her.

I have endured two winters in this land,

In hunger, and in hardship, and alone ;
And have not now much left in me of life.
I have met many exiles like myself,
But not another from the South, like me ;
And some of them have died since I came here.

Yet I have had some solace :—for one night,
When I had tossed awake for many hours,
Alone within my dark and empty room,
Thinking in pity of his cruel end,
The vision of it haunted me, and rose
Too plain, too clear,—the torn and bleeding flesh,
The mangled limbs, the bitter unslaked thirst,
The tender hands, so used to minister
To every need of others, bound and bruised,
And helpless in their agony :—and I
Wept, and wept on, and felt my heart would break
And then into my room there came a light,
And in the light a face was close to me,
And lo, it was my Ugo's very self.
And he himself was standing at my side ;
And smiled as if no pain had ever wrung
The lovely lips, and leant, and spake to me :
'Why weepest thou for me, who lovest me?
I trusted God : He gave me my desire ;
Listen, and I will show thee of my heart.
Christ laid a blessed yoke upon my youth,
To follow Him among his poor and sad,
And I was happy, but not utterly.

Sometimes the way was weary to my feet,
Sometimes the world rang hollow to my voice,
And sometimes when I smiled my heart was sore;
And the dull days and toilsome round became
A weariness and burden to my soul;
And I thought of the Rose of Life, shut fast for me.
But in my dreams beheld another Rose
Fairer and redder, Rose of Martyrdom,
Set high above me, on the Tree of Life.
And when not daring to look up, I saw
That Christ Himself went up and gathered it,
And held it out to me, then I abashed
Drew back, replying, "Nay, Lord, not for me?"
And yet that dream came to me many times.—
God made a miracle, and gave to me
This flower for keeping, Garibaldi's life,
And Italy's deliverance;—and He said,
"Close fast thy hand upon it, while they tear
Body from soul;" *and I had my desire.*
And for that passage which so hurts thy heart,
Because thou lov'st me over tenderly,
Believe me that I think no more of it
Than a mother, when she hears her babe's first cry
Thinks of her sorrow. Shall we wear our palms,
And pay no price for them? I do not say
That it was nothing—God help every soul
That comes to such an hour! but I thank Him
For grace vouchsafed to me to hold fast my Rose
With all its thorns, through those tempestuous gates

Of mortal sorrow, drowning every sense
In seas of anguish driven wave on wave
Before a cold salt wind that on the cold
Faint brow and closed eyes still blew bitterly,
Out of the deeps of darkness, through the still
Faster o'ersweeping of the waterfloods,
Past sight or sound, past counting of the time,
Past all remembering, all forecasting sense,
Past prayer—one hour for that, one hour for this,—
This, that had come to me, "This is their hour
Now, and the power of darkness," so I held,
Clasping, as shipwrecked fingers clasp a spar
After all sense has swooned out of the brain,
This one sole word, Now—never else but Now :—
When lo ! the tossing ceased, and suddenly
I knew the harbour, and a golden light
Round me, and kind hands helping me to shore,
And my Rose safe.—Nay, never weep for me !
And if thou mournest any, mourn for her
Who died at the same hour for the same faith
In Garibaldi's arms, because her pain
Was more than mine, and she had loss besides.

'Wait but a little ! I may tell thee not
The things that are before ;—that thou and I
Did suffer not in vain for. Not in vain.'

And in the sooty dawn I woke alone ;
And every day I wake alone, and know

No joy of life will come again.—O Christ,
I cannot reach thee, I am ignorant !
Thou sentest once Thy Saint to succour me
In my extremity ; and when he left
Me in this world, he left me in Thy charge :
Now therefore for his sake remember me,
And be Thyself my Friend that he is gone.
Though in this world I may not see Thy Face—
This world that must be dark for me till death—
Yet through the darkness hold me by the hand,
That when I meet him, I may meet Thee too

AGESILAO MILANO.

Naples, 1856.

FOR the glory and the passion of this midnight,
I praise Thy name, I give Thee thanks, O Christ.
Thou that hast neither failed me nor forsaken,
Through these hard hours with victory overpriced;
Now that I too of Thy passion have partaken,
For the world's sake called, elected, sacrificed.

Thou wast alone through Thy redemption-vigil,
Thy friends had fled;
The angel at the garden from Thee parted,
And solitude instead,
More than the scourge, or cross, O tender-hearted,
Under the crown of thorns bowed down Thy head.

But I, amid the torture, and the taunting,
I have had Thee!
Thy hand was holding my hand fast and faster,
Thy voice was close to me,
And glorious eyes said, 'Follow me, thy Master,
Smile as I smile thy faithfulness to see.'

Thou hast not called me only, but enabled,
To do Thy will;
Between the flesh and spirit put no severance,
That I might all fulfil;
Given me grace to strike the land's deliverance,
Given me strength to suffer and be still.

Naples is glad because her king has fallen
By my hand first;
Take home the lesson to thee, faithless warden,
The foremost and the worst,
Who makest of this lovely land, God's garden,
A nation violate, corrupt, accurst.

This right hand, wasted now by knife and furnace,
Struck home the blow;
Whether he die to-night or he recover,
This and no more they know,
To follow me one hundred are sworn over,
Whose names they would tear from me ere I go.

Follow me all, and fear not, O my brothers,
For this ye see;
I who passed first confirm you by this token,
Stronger than them are we;
For cord, and fire, and steel to me have spoken,
And none have had an answer out of me.

Is not the air still sickened with the scorching
Of flesh from bone?
Is not the blood from stripes on stripes unslackened
Still dripping to the stone?
Loosened at last, each limb falls bruised and blackened
Into a stiffening weight of fire alone.

Master, our hearts can save us as thou spakest!
Have they not spent
All night their uttermost on me unholpen?
Behold my body rent
And broken;—but among the wounds wide open
Ye will not find a broken sacrament.

By the deed done, by torture overmastered,
And death outbraved,
For ever from denial and dishonour,
Soul, thou this night art saved!
Italia, with the purple robe upon her,
Shall know me faithful by these scars engraved.

'Spared but till sunrise;—else would Death forestall us,
Mercifullest.'
Yea, all their worst is done, they cannot keep me
Now, should they do their best.
Back from the gates of Paradise, nor steep me
In any healing balm of earthly rest.

Sunrise ! and it is summer, and the morning
Waits glorified
An hour hence, when the cool clear rose-cloud gathers
About heaven's eastern side,
And down the azure grottoes where the bathers
Loose the tired limbs, a lovely light will glide.

Fold after fold the winding waves of opal
The sands will drown ;
And when the morning-star amid the pearly
Light of the east goes down,
Then my star shall arise, and late and early
Shine for a jewel in the Master's crown.

Mazzini, Master, singer of the sunrise !
Knowest thou me ?
I held thy hand once, and the summer lightning
Still of thy smile I see ;
Me thou rememberest not amidst the heightening
Vision of God, and of God's Will to be.

But thou wilt hear of me, by noon to-morrow,
And henceforth I
Shall be to thee a memory and a token
Out of the starry sky ;
And when my soul unto thy soul hath spoken,
Enough,—I shall not wholly pass nor die.

Italia, when thou comest to thy kingdom,
Remember me!
Me, who on this thy night of shame and sorrow
Was scourged and slain with thee;
Me, who upon thy resurrection morrow
Shall stand among thy sons beside thy knee.

Shalt thou not be one day, indeed, O Mother,
Enthroned of all,
To the world's vision as to ours now only,
At Rome for festival;
Around thee gathered all thy lost and lonely
And loyal ones, that failed not at thy call;

With golden lyre, or violet robe of mourning,
Or battle-scar;—
And one shall stand more glorious than the others,
He of the Morning-Star,
Whose face lights all the faces of his brothers,
Out of the silvery northern land afar.

But grant to me there, unto all beholders,
Bare to the skies,
To stand with bleeding hands, and feet, and shoulders,
And rapt, unflinching eyes,
And locked lips, yielding to the question-holders
Nor moanings, nor beseechings, nor replies.

Is the hour hard? Too soon it will be over,
Too sweet, too sore;
The arms of Death fold over me with rapture,
Life knew not heretofore;
Heaven will be peace, but I shall not recapture
The passion of this hour, for evermore.

BARON GIOVANNI NICOTERA.[1]

Salerno, 1858.

SALERNO waits amid the heat
Of August, for the words of doom.—
Nicotera and eighty men
Who followed him are here to meet
Award of justice :—it has come.
Follow, and hear the judgment, then.

Ergastolo—an evil name,
An evil thing, a hell on earth ;
Wherein no whisper evermore
Of hope shall enter ; nor the shame
Of stripes, and bonds, and brutal mirth,
Be loosed from life, till life is o'er.

The judge and prisoner, man to man,
Are met together ;—silent one,
With fiery face that in its prime
Looks from the prison changed and wan ;—
While speaks the other, having done
With life, and trembling at the time,

[1] See note C.

'My time is past: some new time wakes:—
I am an old man, I am weak,
I have not seen a face like yours;
And, looking on it, my heart breaks
For such a doom as I must speak:—
I know no heart of man endures

'Such things as are before you now.
I pray you, ere it be too late,
To seek some mercy, for the sake
Of those that love you, and to bow
Unto the world, and kings, and fate:—
You will not bend, but they can break.

'You that are helpless in their hands,
Keep your own heart, but speak some word
Of prayer for pardon, and submit
To that strong law which stays and stands
A rock above the waves unstirred,
While you are dashed to death on it,

'In vain, in vain;—and lives of those
That followed you are cast away.
For them, for you, there yet is grace
If you will have it.' The tears rose:
But answer made Nicotera,
Standing together face to face,—

'Domenico, I speak to you,
Not as the judge who serveth man,
But as the man who serveth God—
God who shall judge between us two :—
I say, I will not, if I can,
Retrace one step my feet have trod.

You serve your King, and it is well ;
He hath not failed you at your need,
Not yet,—and you have royal grace.
We serve our God—and you can tell
Our wages :—and if this indeed
Were all, you have the better place.

' But we have not been desolate
Of such divinest comfortings
As hitherto have borne us up ;
With one inspired Apostolate,
One trumpet-voice that round us rings,
One sanguine sacramental cup.

'And having heard and drunk, nowise
Can we but triumph, since God's light
Hath opened to us—Italy !
And hath unveiled before our eyes,
Far off, and unapproached, and bright,
His last dread angel, Liberty.

'The unseen, unborn face of one
Even as a mother cherisheth,
Who knoweth she shall live to bear
A living and most lovely son,
And yet must die before his breath
Upon her lips makes soft the air,—

'Though now we suffer for her sake,
Her living face we shall not see;
The throes are come, but not the birth.
For we no more shall writhe and wake,
And on our graves her foot shall be,
When she comes down to reign on earth.'

. . . . . .

All day the hammers fast and hard
Have riveted on feet and hands
The weight of irons they shall wear
Through the long dying, and the yard
With fettered pairs is filled, and stands
Nicotera amongst them there.

'For this that I have brought you to,
Children, forgive me ere we part;
A font of fire, a whole life's loss:
And yet I know that none of you
Forgiveth me, but in his heart
Blesseth me rather, for this cross.

'Through every hour of painful breath,
Henceforth our souls must carve their price;
Life's hope is past, life's purpose stays.
Better than life, better than death,
Is this the living sacrifice:
God keep us worthy all our days!

'The earliest martyrs, the unnamed
Saints, the forgotten rank and file
Of Christ's unconquered soldiery,
Under the same fierce suns that flamed
On the same bare and blasted isle,
Suffered in lifelong constancy.

'The same rocks echo the same clank
Of chains, the same taskmaster's stroke,
And grind of stone, and anvil's roar:
Ye go to drink the cup they drank;
And yet they live, their chains are broke,
Their martyrdom has long been o'er.

'God be with you! For me, they say,
I go, kept back for such a meed
As man's heart faileth him to see:
Therefore forget me not, but pray
The grace be greater than the need;
What matter, if God go with me!

'No darkness is so deep, but white
Wings of the angels through can pierce;
Nor any chain such heaps lies in
But God's own hand can hold it light;
Nor is there any flame so fierce
But Christ Himself can stand therein.'

. . . . . .

The sunset comes; the guarded rank
Through thronging thousands of the town,
Gathered on window, roof, and door,
With heavy step, and ceaseless clank,
To the dark ship is passing down,
That waits to take them from the shore

Ah Saints, the bare and bleeding feet!
Ah Christ, the bruised and bleeding hands!
Ah God, the pallid faces there!
One low long sob goes through the street,
One passionate curse God understands,
One bitter agony of prayer.

A dream of liquid colour! lo,
The hills that slope into the sea
Range back from rose to violet,
And melting into indigo,
In farthest mountain mystery,
Upon the stainless East are set

The fishing-fleet at anchor-hold
Leans over, every purple barge,
Its purple shadow on the seas;
—In sweeps of silver outward rolled,
Till points of pearl upon the marge
Set sail for the Hesperides.

Midway the Sirens' Islands mark
The blue and glassy wave that flows
And ebbs within their cavern-line;
Lying all cool and lovely-dark
Against the cloudless West that glows
Through depths of crimson crystalline.

But the black hull is closer moored
Against the white shore, motionless;
All round, the opal flood of light,
Beneath the great black shape obscured,
Quivers intenser;—is not this
The very gate of Heaven in sight?

Not yet, not yet! Another day.—
O, faithful hearts, take this for sign,
That as upon your agony,
With unmoved faces on their way,
Shine through the sunset the divine
Lights of Italia's shore and sea,—

Some day, hereafter, ye shall gaze
On them through other eyes than these
Of dry despair;—and happy tears
Suddenly break forth—'Are the days
Ended indeed? The skies and seas
Are passing. Past, with all the years.

. . . . . .

The night has fallen suddenly;
A wind comes sighing from the seas;
And they are passed beyond our sight.
And none Nicotera shall see
Henceforth, though he went not with these,
He who is shut from life and light.

For he who was their Chief and First,
Shall suffer chief and first of all.
Dark caverns of captivity
In many an isle they hold; and worst
Of any, rumour can recall,
Is Favignana's, out at sea.

They say Tiberius hollowed it,
The year that Christ from Calvary
Looked down, and said 'Forgive them, Lord.'
It lieth under water, lit
By such faint daylight shadowy
As down four hundred steps is poured;

Down in the heart of naked rock,
  Below the seas that evermore
    Sound through the dank and oozing walls;
The chains are rusted in the lock,
  And on the rotting crusted floor
    The centipede and scorpion crawls.

This legend on the tower above
  Is carved: '*Si entra vivo, e*
    Si esce morto.' But Death waits:
And here Nicotera, for love
  Of Italy, through night and day
    Endures alone, and expiates.

. . . . .

O Master of the mighty hand
  Who sealest sentence with a kiss,
    So that thy doomsmen's hearts grow light, —
Is the word true? Shall the faith stand?
  Is the work worth such woe as this?
    Can the day recompense the night?

Thou sendest forth, and dost not spare,
  Thy best to meet the tyrant's worst;
    Thou sowest lives for Seed of Life.
O starry-stern through all despair,
  Straight on thy course as at the first,
    Where is *thine* anguish in this strife?

The live pain burneth like a lamp
Within thy dark eyes passionate,
It burneth to the soul away:
It saith, 'To me the dungeon-damp,
The last farewell, the felon's fate,
Were nothing:—I know more, and stay.

'Facing the foreseen doom ye know,
Through flesh and soul's extremity,
Fight on, and keep your hearts alive!
I have gone through where ye must go,
I have seen past the agony,
I behold God in Heaven, and strive.

NOTES.

NOTE A, page 16.

Jacopo Ruffini was the earliest and most beloved of Mazzini's friends, and was associated with him in his first secret enterprise for the unity of Italy. See 'Life and Works of Joseph Mazzini,' vol. i. page 331.

NOTE B, page 239.

The following is the original text of this document :—

NOTIFICAZIONE.

CARLO per Divina Misericordia del Titolo di S. Lorenzo in Lucina della S. R. C. Prete Cardinale OPPIZZONI Arcivescovo di Bologna.

In mezzo alle turbolenze, ed ai rivolgimenti che afflissero non ha guari queste infelici Provincie, e la cui fresca memoria spaventa ancora l' immaginazione, l' affanno che più d' ogni altro ci punse nel profondo del cuore (dopo quello che sentimmo per le sacrileghe offese contro Dio ed il suo Vicario) ci derivò dalla crudele e violenta necessità del silenzio. Imperciocchè avremmo pur sopratutto desiderato di potere alzare la nostra voce di Padre e di Pastore, così per rompere ogni pietra di perdizione e di scandalo come per rimuovere i semplici di spirito da quelle insidie, onde alcuni uomini, pochi per vero dire di numero, ma tanto più audaci commettitori di male, quanto insigniti pur troppo di ordine ecclesiastico, ed obbligati altresì a voto claustrale, violavano ogni legge, e con pubbliche e farnetiche declamazioni contaminavano le coscienze, e con teoriche

ridicole milantavano che ogni supremo potere non era che un dono precario delle popolazioni, suscitando per tal modo il dispregio a qualsivoglia dominazione e bestemmiando, come disse S. Giuda, ogni maestà—*dominationem spernunt, majestatem blasphemant.*—Tacciavano altresì di superstizioni le sacrosante ed inveterate massime religiose con costumi per lo meno equivoci, dichiarandosi con impudenza maestri di morale. Nè certamente ci avrebbe ritenuto o il timore di privato danno, o il pericolo della nostra vita giunta ormai al suo termine: chè ben sappiamo come il buon Pastore debba offerire tutto se stesso in olocausto pel salvamento del gregge alle sue cure affidato, e voi già ricorderete come protestemmo solennemente contro la baldanza de' tristi, e come le nostre parole fossero accolte con impudente dileggio. Perlocchè memori da un lato di quell' ammonimento dell' Ecclesiastico (*Cap.* 20 *v.* 7)—*Sapiens tacebit usque ad tempus,*—e scienti dall' altro, che le provvidenze da Noi implorate a tanta jattura e già ripetutamente prescritte dal Sommo Pontefice (prima che fosse costretto con nefanda audacia ad esulare dall' Apostolico Seggio) non si mandavano ad effetto da chi avrebbe dovuto procacciarne l'adempimento, non altro ci rimaneva che di spargere amarissime lagrime tra il vestibolo e l'altare, solo confortati dal pensiero di potere noi pure esclamare con Tertulliano (*in apolog. adv. gen. cap.* 38)—*nihil est Nobis cum insania circi.*—Ora però, che il pietoso Iddio ci ha aperti i tesori delle sue infinite misericordie, e ci ha rimessi nella pienezza di esercizio del nostro vescovile ministerio ripeteremo—*Sapiens tacebit usque ad tempus.*—E quindi v' indirizziamo, o amatissimi figliuoli, le nostre parole, se non per ricondurvi a quella via di rettitudine e di verità, da cui non vi siete per la maggior parte allontanati, almeno per incuorarvi a stare in essa forti e magnanimi—*Estote fortes in bello.*—E certamente fa di mestieri di calpestare con eroica sprezzatura i funesti ricordi di quella sorda ed empia guerra, che fu mossa alle anime vostre con aspetto, diremmo quasi, di giocondità e di solazzo, e con promesse di una gloria e di una felicità menzognera. Noi qui non ripeteremo, dilettissimi figliuoli, le fiorite bestemmie colle quali nel nome Santissimo del Crocifisso, si bandiva la rivolta all' Autorità di un venerando Pontefice; si dipingeva perfino come atto di fraude ed istrumento di congiura il divino Sagramento della *Penitenza*, si spargevano dai

ministri di Belial le più nere calunnie, si proclamavano massime inducenti all' errore, e quasi anche all' eresia, ed allo scisma, esi gridava addosso la croce ai ministri di Cristo: e sotto velame di combattere l'ipocrisia, ed il regresso, si attizzava il fuoco delle rabbie civili, e fra il nostro Clero, esemplarmente pacifico, ed il minuto popolo, si volevano gittare i semi di orribili e pestifere separazioni.

Ora, o Carissimi, dimenticate per sino il suono di quelle orrende parole che offesero le orecchie anche dei meno pii, o ricordatele soltanto per sentirne un salutar raccapriccio, come di una brutta maledizione e di un grido d' Inferno.

Nè i bei concetti di patria carità, onde si volevano addolcire le più sfoggiate enormezze per cogliere alla rete i semplici, e per concitare le moltitudini, debbono, o carissimi, allucinare le vostre menti.—*Videte, ne quis vos decipiat per philosophiam et inanem fallaciam, secundum traditionem hominum, et non secundum Christum.*—(*Coloss.* 2. 8). L'amore di Patria è santo quando in prima si ami com è debito Iddio e si onori; e le leggi di lui, che sono tutto carità, si osservino, le quali poste alla sacra custodia del Romano Pontefice e dei Vescovi non debbon esser tradotte a bordello sacrilego nelle piazze, nelle taverne, e nei circoli apostatando empiamente, ed insultando a Pietro ed alla Chiesa. La quale mentre comanda al ricco di soccorrere a' poverelli, comanda a questi di alleviare colle fatiche le loro strettezze, e di portarne le pene con generosa rassegnazione. Ma Dio eterno! quali massime desolatrici, anzi distruggitrici di ogni ordine civile e sociale non si volevano invece insinuare e mantenere da trucolenti banditori? Alla soave legge dell' Evangelo era sostituito il solletico delle passioni lusingate, adulate, sospinte (se Dio non era, e l' intercessione delle divina sua Madre) a tale stremo di scelleratezza che il Mondo forse non poteva ricordare maggiore. Rotto ogni vincolo di morale, di pudicizia e di religione, l' Uomo sarebbe rimasto derelitto ad una vita bruta e selvaggia; con questa perfidia per soprassello, che i furibondi demagoghi della bella ma misera Penisola, mentre combattevano ogni autorità ed ogni diritto di possesso, erano avidissimi usurpatori delle pubbliche e delle private sostanze, e si arrogavano un dominio di feroce ed inaudita tirannide

Ma non più di essi, o Carissimi, nè di coloro che con sofismi, con insidie, e con virolenti arringhe avrebbero voluto confortare il loro regno. Guardiamo a Noi, dilettissimi, e stiamo vigilanti, che non venga a intromettersi negli animi nostri quel pestifero ed assurdo scetticismo, che distrugge ogni principio, rompe ogni freno, si lascia andare in balia del caso, e precipitando di abisso in abisso, finisce per mandare quel grido spaventevole che—*non ci è Dio.*—Non dipartiamoci mai dalla filosofia del vangelo, che è la sola infallibile: siamo veri e buoni cattolici, e saremo veri e buoni cittadini; adempiamo con netta coscienza i doveri del nostro stato, ed ameremo di vero e proficuo amore la Patria: siamo zelanti operatori del bene, e potremo allora salire ad ogni desiderabile felicità: vinciamo le nostre passioni incomposte, ed i nostri più fieri ed irreligiosi nemici saranno vinti.

Tutto questo, o Cari, Noi vi preghiamo da Dio, e con tutto il fervore vi compartiamo la nostra pastorale Benedizione.

Dal Nostro Palazzo Arcivescovile di Bologna questo dì 3 agosto 1849.

CARLO Card. OPPIZZONI Arciv.

NOTE C, page 275.

The expedition of Baron Giovanni Nicotera was organised by Mazzini for the liberation of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies in 1857. The leaders of the expedition were Nicotera and Pisacane.

They sailed from Genoa with a company of 160 volunteers. They landed at Ponza, where they were met by the Royal troops, and an obstinate struggle ensued. Pisacane was killed on the field, and Nicotera left senseless and almost mortally wounded. Half of their followers were killed; the other half taken prisoners with Nicotera. They were kept in prison nine months before being brought to trial, during which time the hardship and cruelty of their treatment excited much popular indignation and sympathy. Much feeling was also evoked by the firmness of Nicotera, who both before and during the trial was exposed to every temptation to betray his confederates; and by the harshness of the sentence passed upon him in consequence of the failure of these attempts.